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# Mobile Beat

THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S

ISSUE 115 JULY 2008

GAZINE

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## THE BIG SCREEN

LEVERAGING VIDEO FOR  
MAXIMUM IMPACT

## LET THE GAMES BEGIN

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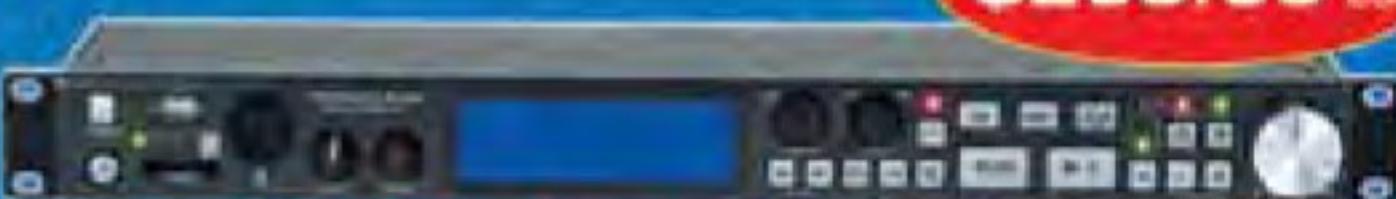


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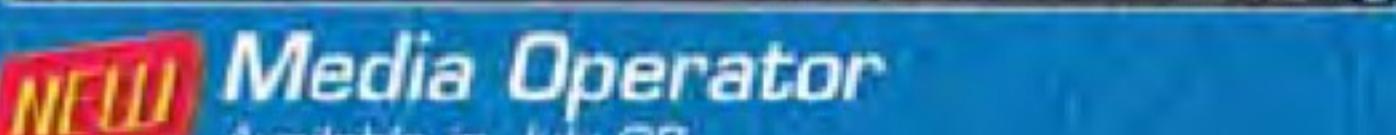
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PLUG IN!

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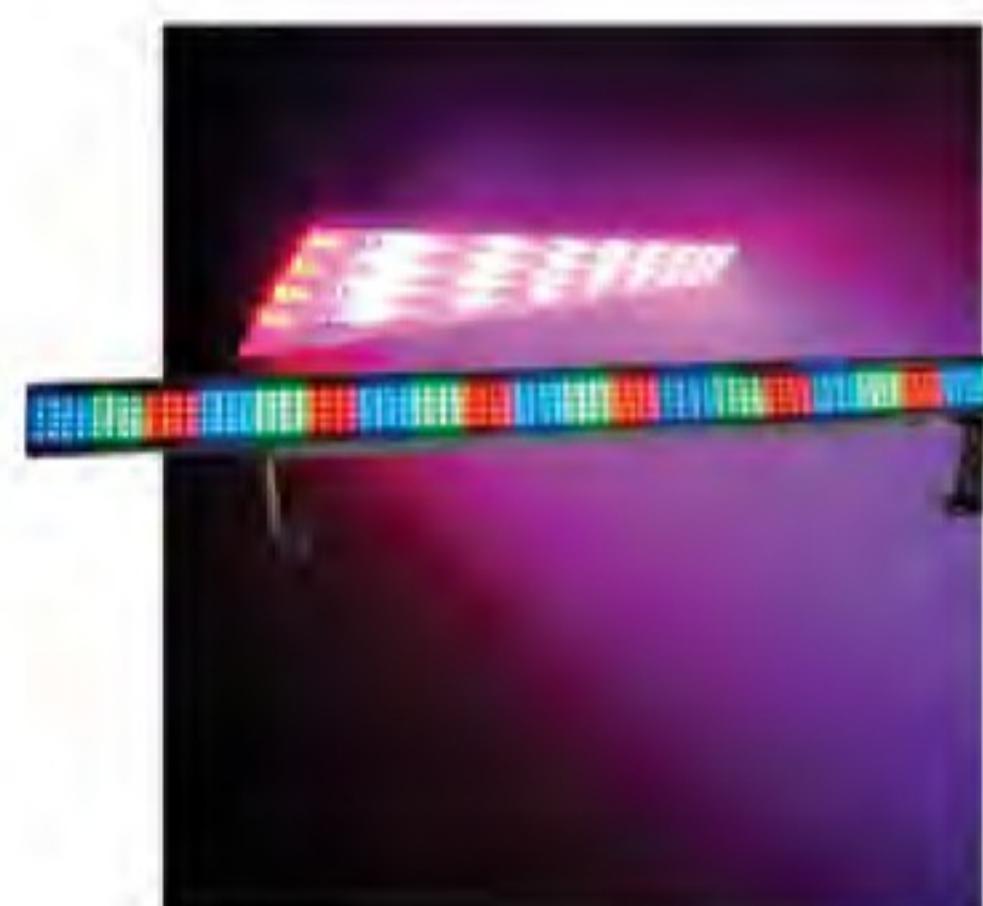
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# Remembering a Pioneer and a Driving Force

The DJ profession loses a trailblazer with the passing of Bruce Keslar

By Mike Buonaccorso

**In the beginning...God created everything...and far down the assembly line, He created the mobile DJ industry...and somewhere there poking around in the bushes of the freshly planted gardens we would surely have found Bruce Keslar.**

Gazing backward from this age of instant information and five-second sound bites, many of you today may have been in high school or working lonely one night stands when the early age of DJ dinosaurs roamed the earth making things happen the hard way.

Back in early 1991, Bob Lindquist and myself were putting the finishing touches on the first issue of a project, which was going to be called *Mobile Beat*, when the phone rang. "Some guy from Philadelphia wants to talk to me," I remember Bob saying. This was long before the internet, so outside of your own hometown, it was unlikely one would ever know another DJ.

"Well, talk to him," I said. Bob continued, "No, he wants to come here to talk!" Although



there was no magazine yet, Bruce had apparently gotten a copy of Bob's book *Spinnin'*, and said he had a few questions, which had to be asked in person.

So a meeting was set for the local Wendy's, with an agenda as yet unknown. Later that week, armed only with a pocket full of ideas and a lot of excitement, we first met Bruce Keslar of Ultimate Entertainment. He proceeded to elucidate about magazines, associations and trade shows to bring *mobile* DJs together, and he thought surely consulting with the author of the

first-and-only-book-to-date on mobile DJing would be a good place to start. He had no idea *Mobile Beat Magazine* was weeks away from its public launch, so needless to say, he was surprised when informed one of his ideas was already in process. But without hesitation or knowing pricing information, he took out an ad in the first issue of a non-existent magazine, selling DJ jackets and banners.

However, that was just a sidebar to the business of the day. What Bruce walked away with that day was the nugget he was looking for: a contact. That contact was Dennis Hampson, founder of the Canadian Disc Jockey Association. When it came to DJ organizations, the Canadians were years ahead of the Americans. The CDJA was

CONTINUED ON PAGE 72

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**B-52**



# Big News: ProDJ.Com and Mobile Beat Online Get Major Facelifts!

As many readers know, ProDJ Publishing, the parent company of *Mobile Beat Magazine*, has its background in online media, beginning its life as ProDJ.Com - The Internet's Source for DJs. Over the last two-plus years we have worked to move *Mobile Beat* into the next generation of media with its online presence growing tremendously and its tie-in to ProDJ.Com becoming stronger and stronger.

Over the last few months we have worked with our programmers and designers to design a more accessible, more interactive and speedier ProDJ Publishing. It all starts out with the new homepage of ProDJ.Com. The homepage has been reorganized and now has more depth, including links to all of the primary features of ProDJ/MobileBeat Online.

ProDJ.Com wants to be "home" for your mobile disc jockey business and has features available from this menu such as Start.ProDJ.Com (which is next in line to be remodeled), Mall.ProDJ.Com with the Official Gear Guide for *Mobile Beat Magazine*, Google.ProDJ.Com (a licensed version of the Google engine that indexes ProDJ/MobileBeat and other parts of the net for DJs),

## Buonaccorso Named DJU Dean

Michael Buonaccorso, who co-founded *Mobile Beat Magazine* and has been the producer of all of the MB trade shows, has recently been appointed to head up the new and revamped version of ProDJ's Disc Jockey University.

Since its inception in 1995, the ProDJ.com network of resources has experienced constant growth. Disc Jockey University, established in 1999, was one major expansion aimed at providing education to the DJ industry.

"I can't think of too many people in this industry who can bring such a broad range of knowledge and experience to this undertaking," said Ryan Burger, ProDJ Publisher. "Mike has been involved in so many significant *Mobile Beat* projects over the years, with successful results."

Buonaccorso, having spent many years reviewing and editing content for the magazine, as well as interviewing and selecting presenters at MB trade shows, feels education is a

key to keeping ahead of the competition, whether it be online or offline. He is interested in seeking out new contributors to DJU, as well as tying together much of the foundational content of *Mobile Beat*.

"Change is the big buzzword for 2008," stated Buonaccorso. "So it can be applied here as well. Share your ideas with us, and express your opinions. We want you to be a part of what's planned!"

Mike can be reached at mb@mobilebeat.com

MobileBeat.Com and the DJ University. (See more on the last two below.) Additionally, all of our web services such as DJWebmin, EZDJWebsites and MyDJSERVICE.Com are linked up.

DJ Webmin helps you manage your business anywhere through its full online event admin interface for professionals, and is used extensively by hundreds of disc jockeys across the world. For web hosting, our EZDJWebsites.Com service is available, with an expanding library of template-driven websites that you can customize. MyDJSERVICE.Com offers full virtual hosting on dedicated servers exclusively serving our industry. All of these web services are moving towards being managed from one central point, with your members.mobilebeat.com account, where subscriptions and convention passes can now be accessed.

**MB Upgrade and a New U**  
MobileBeat.Com and the DJ University have both received the most attention on this reconstruction phase of ProDJ.Com's network. Both went to a new software platform that allows much more interaction

between the various authors, contributors and editors for these websites. The sites now feature specific smartphone-based editions that automatically load when accessed from your Treo, BlackBerry or similar mobile device. Additionally, they are fully RSS feed-driven, so you can attach this to other sites that you may use for your homepage, tie it into your Gmail account, and much more.

As the interactive Web 2.0 revolution progresses, we saw this as a growth area servicing more DJs (while killing time at their events waiting for people to show up?) who might surf the latest news, reviews, events and articles at our various sites. Start.ProDJ.Com, our conversation and portal site, is next in line for remodeling and will be similarly powered later this year.

Look for a lot of fresh content in the form of news, reviews, classes

and more being posted to MobileBeat.Com and DJU.ProDJ.Com. And now it's all more easily accessible while you're on the road, being a mobile DJ! **MB**



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#### X-Citing Move!

American DJ has unveiled a revolutionary new kind of intelligent moving head powered by a mega-watt LED. The company's new X-Move LED utilizes one super-sized 20W white LED to create a brawny beam that's powerful enough to project gobo patterns and colors across floors, walls and ceilings. To see the X-Move LED in action, go to [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bbz3WuQDKJ1](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bbz3WuQDKJ1)

Comparable to a 250W halogen lamp in output, the X-Move LED's beam shines through the fixture's color and gobo wheels to create stunning images and patterns that look like they were produced by a traditional halogen or discharge effect. But although the X-Move LED's effects are indistinguishable from a conventional moving head to the eye, the unit offers the benefits and ease of LED technology, such as a long

50,000-hour rated lamp life, a low power draw, and low heat production. At a mere 44W, it consumes just a fraction of the energy of a traditional 250W effect. In addition to saving energy, this lets you hook up more units on a single electrical circuit.

The X-Move LED is also much smaller than a typical 250W effect, weighing only 10 lbs. and standing just 12.5" high, making it easily transportable for mobile entertainers. But even while being so compact, the unit features a 14° beam angle and is capable of wide, sweeping room coverage with 540° pan and 270° tilt. It uses high-quality stepper motors for smooth, fast, fluid movements.

Like any high-quality moving head effect, the X-Move LED has separate color and gobo wheels, allowing users to create a wide variety of



exciting visual images. In total, there are 8 colors plus white, and 8 gobos plus spot. The fixture also includes a Gobo Scroll Mode, Gobo Shake Effect and Variable Strobe Effect, as well as 0-100% electronic dimming, all of which are DMX controllable. Equipped with 6 DMX channels, the X-Move LED can also be run without a controller in Sound Active and Master/Slave modes.

A convenient 4-button menu system with a bright LED display makes it easy for users to operate the X-Move LED. Another handy feature is Auto X-Y repositioning, which will automatically return the fixture to its original position if it's accidentally bumped or jarred. [www.americandj.com](http://www.americandj.com)

#### Rock with a New Jukebox

Acesonic Corporation, a leading manufacturer of karaoke products, announced the release of its Acesonic JB-1200 Jukebox, the "ultimate accessory" to its Karaoke On Demand line of products. The jukebox comes complete with two 12" woofers (4-ohm), tweeters, 2 side-mounted mid-range drivers, a bill collector, and front panel controls, all in a sturdy black wooden cabinet. Maximum continuous voltage is set at 250 watts but the maximum wattage can be pushed to 500 watts. The whole unit weights about 132 pounds.

The Acesonic JB-1200 Jukebox is the first and only karaoke player to accept cash in exchange for song credits. Jukebox owners can set the cost per song at anything from \$0 to \$20. Owners can also see how many total songs have been ordered, total funds collected, and total credits accumulated. The bill collector accepts \$1, \$5, \$10 and \$20 US dollar bills. Jukebox owners

can also set up random play and turn the billing function off to keep a continuous stream of uninterrupted music going.

For an additional cost, the Acesonic JB-1200 Jukebox is also available fully loaded with an Acesonic KOD-800 with 320GB hard drive, an Acesonic AM-825 500 Watt Karaoke Mixing Amplifier, an Acesonic VHF-8000 Dual Rechargeable Wireless Microphone and 100 feet of AWG speaker wire.

Music and microphone volumes, song key and song lookup can all be controlled directly from the attractive front control panel. Singers can easily queue up songs by punching in the song numbers found in the KOD songbook or by browsing the user-friendly on-screen song selection interface

For more information about the JB-1200 Jukebox, please visit [www.acesonic.com](http://www.acesonic.com) or [www.acekaraoke.com](http://www.acekaraoke.com). **MB**





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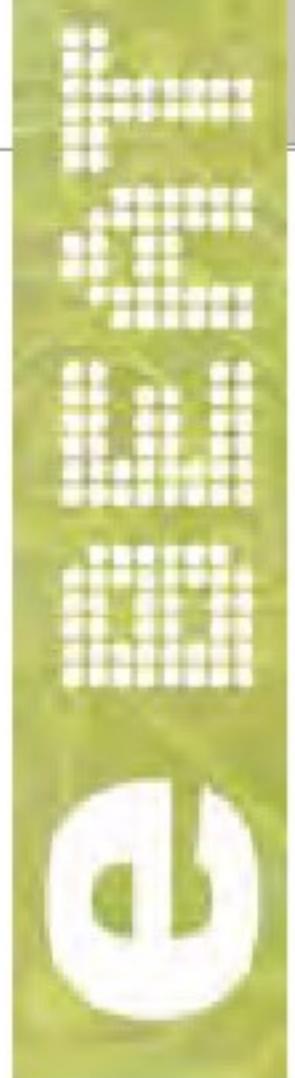
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## Opening the Garage

Making music on a Mac with Apple's GarageBand '08 is fun, but doing so easily and getting songs to sound just right can require real effort. With a pair of new ebooks about GarageBand—*Take Control of Making Music with GarageBand '08* and *Take Control of Recording with GarageBand '08*—amateur and experienced musicians alike can get started, work creatively with GarageBand's many features, follow along with linked-in audio clips that supplement the written text, and export their creations in a variety of formats. Both titles sell for \$10 separately or may be purchased together for \$17.50 at <http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/garageband-music.html>.

In *Take Control of Making Music with GarageBand '08*, Seattle musician Jeff Tolbert's step-by-step instructions guide readers through using GarageBand's built-in loops to create three songs, explaining not only how to use GarageBand's editing and mixing features but also how to be playful and creative while composing tunes that please the ear. In this 110-page title, readers will learn how to plan a song, get the most out of Magic GarageBand, edit loops using both graphical and notation view, create exciting mixes, and export their masterpieces as songs or iPhone ringtones. The book also covers how to change track volume, tempo, and panning dynamically, and how to work with GarageBand's effects, including the new Visual EQ.

Tolbert's second title, the 122-page *Take Control of Recording with GarageBand '08*, he shares his GarageBand know-how and years of recording experience to help readers get the most out of their existing gear or purchase new equipment. Readers will find real-world recording studio techniques, learn how to use a microphone effectively, and discover how to apply effects like a pro. Clear steps and practical advice help readers plan a recording

session, record multiple tracks at once, and fix mistakes easily. Two example songs demonstrate many of the techniques discussed.

## New Acrobat

Adobe Systems Incorporated has introduced Adobe® Acrobat® 9 software, a significant upgrade delivering native support for Adobe Flash® technology, the ability to unify a wide range of content in rich PDF Portfolios, and access to real-time capabilities for co-navigating a PDF document with colleagues.

For the first time, Acrobat 9 provides deep support for Adobe Flash technology, enabling users to include Adobe Flash Player compatible video and application files in PDF documents. Recipients simply need free Adobe Reader® 9 software to access the content. Now, static documents can come to life as dynamic communications.

Acrobat 9 also includes the ability to unify a wide range of content into a single document with the new concept of PDF Portfolios. PDF Portfolios enable business professionals to assemble multiple media types, such as documents, video, audio, and even 3D objects, into one, compressed PDF file. Users can then choose among several professional layouts - or create their own - to quickly integrate content, define navigation, and add polish and branding.

Additionally, Acrobat 9 users can access Acrobat.com for storing and sharing files, use it as a central location for collecting data as part of a forms process, and to gather comments in a shared document review. Acrobat.com includes other services, such as Adobe ConnectNow, personal Web conferencing that provides desktop sharing, video and voice conferencing, and integrated chat; and Adobe Buzzword®, an elegant, Web-based word processor that can be used to easily co-author and share documents for comment and review, creating high-quality print results.

The Acrobat 9 family consists of Acrobat 9 Standard, Acrobat 9 Pro, and the new Acrobat 9 Pro Extended software. The most comprehensive member of the family, Acrobat 9 Pro Extended, includes Adobe Presenter software for easily turning Microsoft® PowerPoint presentations into multimedia experiences that can be published as PDF files. Pricing and Availability. More information on the Acrobat 9 family is available online at [www.adobe.com/acrobat](http://www.adobe.com/acrobat). **MB**

# Solid Video Control

PCDJ VJ combines tried and true digital audio with video in a powerful new combination

By James Humphreys

Incorporating video and graphics into mobile DJ setups is heralded as the way of the future by many within the industry. DVD players, video mixers and visuals software have all been reviewed in previous issues of *Pro Mobile* and have all been put to use by mobile DJs across the country. However, a large number of DJs feel that software-based video mixing, in particular, is the way forward. Many of these have been eagerly anticipating the release of PCDJ VJ, which allows computer-based DJs to incorporate music videos and visuals into their performances.

PCDJ kindly provided my review copy of VJ loaded onto one of their flagship 00DJ dedicated DJ computer systems. Before I move on to the main subject of my review, I'll take a few paragraphs to remind you of what the 00DJ has to offer.

## The Hard...

I have often taken my trusty laptop computer along with me to gigs, but am always worried about it getting broken. In fact, I attribute its current ill health to the hammering it has received out on the road. On numerous occasions I have taken my laptop to test DMX control software or digital playback software while reviewing products, and for a long time I used it to run a music database to help me find tracks in my CD collection. But regular laptops simply aren't designed to take the abuse that a mobile DJ's gear is subjected to each weekend. That is where the 00DJ comes in; it is tough enough for life on the road, while offering the functionality and connectivity a DJ needs. Not to mention it looks the part!

The 00DJ is built into a sleek, but very tough, aluminium carry case that keeps it protected both during transit and operation. It features a touch screen display, illuminated key-



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board, studio quality sound card and a forced-air cooling system.

Since the initial version of the 00DJ, its creators have regularly added ideas from their customers and have moved with the times, adapting the unit to the needs of the modern mobile DJ. The current version features three USB 2.0 ports, VGA and S-Video connections for karaoke or video output, a 500GB hard drive, and an Intel Core Duo mobile 1.8 GHz processor.

#### ...and the Soft of It

Of course you don't have to own a 00DJ system to make use of PCDJ VJ, which is the main focus of this review. PCDJ VJ is a natural progression of the PCDJ digital DJing software, allowing users to mix



together music videos just as they do audio files. All common video files are supported, including AVI, MPEG, MOV and WMV. The software isn't limited to video, as all of the audio features can also be used to play regular music files. PCDJ VJ is also ideal for karaoke, since it supports MP3+G, WAV+G, WMA+G and OGG+G formats, and also supports binding of the CDG files to their MP3 counterpart as a single ZIP file.

The basic layout is similar to other versions of PCDJ. The bottom area of the screen is dedicated to finding tracks, while two "virtual decks" are located towards the top of the screen, one to the left and the other to the right. At the very top of the screen is a waveform display that shows a graphical representation of the audio from the two tracks currently loaded in the virtual decks, to aid with mixing them together. The obvious additions to the layout are the preview monitor for the video on each virtual deck and also the central preview monitor, which shows the mixed video output that will be displayed on your projector(s) or video screen(s). There is also a separate crossfader for video mixing, allowing the video and audio elements to be mixed independently.

As with audio-only versions of PCDJ, all you have to do to play a track is drag it from the browser area of the screen onto one of the virtual

decks. It takes 5 to 10 seconds to completely load the waveform of a track, however, it is possible to start playback while it is still loading.

The browser section is split into three areas: a navigation menu that allows you to locate the folders containing music and video files on your computer, a list of all the tracks in the currently selected folder and a "waitlist." The waitlist allows requests or tracks that you know you want to play later to be set aside for easy access. The software can even be configured to automatically load the next track from the waitlist when the last track finishes playing.

Virtual folders can also be created. These are the PCDJ version of playlists, allowing DJs to create lists of must-play tracks for different genres,

which can then be quickly located and loaded. A simple utility is also integrated into the software that allows easy editing of track information tags.

Not only can tracks be located by browsing the folders of your PC, there is also a very user-friendly search function that makes it easy to quickly locate a particular track within a large collection. The clever search interface will match anything from a single

character to any combination of 10 fields (title, artist, filepath, filename, comment, album, genre, year, BPM, key). Each time a character is typed the results are narrowed down, meaning that most tracks can be located from a large collection by entering only four or five characters.

The "history" feature automatically records a list of all of the tracks that you play on a given day. This is perfect for giving a little helping hand if you are stuck for inspiration and want to find out what you played at another similar gig.

#### Mixology

In terms of audio mixing, everything is included that you could possibly need: level control, gain control, three-band EQ, seamless looping, and pitch control with key lock. There are also four hot cue points for each deck. An audio effects section provides a drop-down list for selecting things like flanger, filter and turntable brake and spinback effects. A particularly useful feature is the Sync button that will automatically synchronize the tempo of a track to match the one currently playing on the other deck. This is a great tool for helping you to create a seamless mix very quickly—which is important now that you also have to worry about the visual element of your performance.

A pair of drop-down boxes below the main preview monitor provide access to video effects

and transitions. The effects can be used to add excitement to your video mix and include a negative filter, strobe and an automatic "boom" effect that quickly zooms in and out to the beat of the music. Other effects can be used to add extra graphical elements such as the Titler, which creates an MTV-style banner showing the artist and title of the currently playing video. There is also a Text effect that allows custom words and phrases to be superimposed onto the video image. Also worth a mention is the slideshow effect, which allows the use of still images—ideal for when you don't have the video for a particular track. I personally would have liked to have seen a few more effects for use with the video tracks, for example, some visualizations or animated text. I am sure that more effects will soon become available as plug-ins.

There is a good collection of transitions available ranging from a basic fade, through common effects such as zoom and wipe, to more complex effects that are difficult to describe but look very effective. As well as the video crossfader, there are also auto-fade buttons that facilitate smooth video blends.

Although it is fairly easy to get started with the software, when you delve a little deeper there are a lot of advanced features and settings to discover. For example the auto pitch matching option can be enabled so that when a track is loaded its pitch will automatically be set to match that of the track that is currently playing. Another useful feature is the auto gain option, which automatically sets the gain of a loaded track to either normalise at 0dB or match the currently playing track.

#### More Creative Control

Another hardware issue to consider before jumping into any PC-based video mixing is your platform. Because of the processor-hungry nature of real-time video mixing, a fairly powerful computer will be needed to make the most of the software—not to mention a huge hard drive for storing all of those big video files.

If you haven't got a 00DJ complete with touch screen but you still like the hands-on feel of hardware gear, PCDJ VJ can be configured for control by any of the plethora of MIDI compatible control devices on the market. It is also natively compatible with many of the most popular DJ controllers, including Numark's iCDX, DMC2 and Total Control; PCDJ's DAC-2 and DAC-3; and the new HC4500 from Denon. If you don't have a separate controller, but still prefer pressing buttons to clicking a mouse, it is also possible to create customized keyboard shortcuts for all of the software's features.

Overall, PCDJ VJ is very easy to use and provides all of the controls and features necessary for a polished audio/visual DJ performance. The software should be intuitive for all DJs, and particularly for existing PCDJ users. PCDJ VJ provides an excellent way to accomplish both audio and video mixing via your computer...with style.

[www.pcdj.com](http://www.pcdj.com) MB

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## VEHICLE REVIEW



## A Tribute to Hybrid Technology Going...Green

By Anthony B. Barthel

With all the world going "green" wouldn't it be a great marketing coup to have your DJ company perceived as a green company? If that's a direction that makes sense to you, the Mazda Tribute Hybrid might help with that.

The tested Tribute Hybrid was a rather capable smaller SUV that felt right the moment I sat in it. Let's go for a ride! I twisted the key and... nothing happened. Or at least it didn't seem to. Mazda's Tribute can operate on electric power until the vehicle reaches up to 25 miles per hour, so you don't necessarily start the gasoline engine just because you twisted the key!

### What's Hot

Hybrids are hot, plain and simple. As fuel prices rise, more people are looking for ways to use less of the black gold known as petroleum, and many of them are turning to hybrids. Toyota was brilliant to offer so many hybrid models up front, and others are trying to catch up. Indeed the hybrid system in the Mazda Tribute is actually licensed

from Toyota but Ford and Mazda have incorporated some of their own technology into this vehicle as well. Ford, you ask? Yes, Mazda is a member of the Ford Family and the Tribute is a sister vehicle to the Ford Escape and Mercury Mariner.

The bottom line on a vehicle like this is the fuel economy. I was able to achieve about 32 miles per gallon while the Tribute Hybrid was with me. That includes a large amount of freeway cruising, which is not the ideal condition for a hybrid.

Where a vehicle like this really shines is when the traffic gets miserable. One of my journeys in the Tribute was a 200-mile round trip, and most of that driving was freeway "cruising," or so it was supposed to be. As is typical of Southern California freeways, someone had done something their insurance company was going to hear about and traffic was at a virtual standstill. This lasted almost an hour. During that time the Tribute Hybrid predominantly operated on the electrical energy it had stored in its batteries, inching along with the electric motor only. These conditions are where a traditional vehicle is the least efficient but where a hybrid really shines. Rather than having to idle a gasoline engine while the vehicle goes nowhere, hybrids can shut off the gasoline engine and, in the case of the Tribute, simply shuttle along on electric power. That's neat.

In my time with the Tribute Hybrid it became a personal challenge to drive on the electric motor only for as much as possible. When putting around in town I learned to use a light foot on the accelerator pedal which meant that I could hit 25 miles per hour before activating the gasoline engine. This was kinda cool.

The way this system works is by measuring the amount of oomph (yes, that's a technical term) needed to motivate the Tribute. For example, if you need the power to merge onto the freeway from a dead stop the gasoline engine and electric motor operate in tandem to provide

the most power possible. If you're just putting around town, the vehicle might operate on just the electric motor up to about 25 miles per hour. This is completely automatic and makes its decisions without the driver having to interfere. It's actually a pretty smart system.

And it all comes wrapped in a vehicle that can easily accommodate four adults and a fair amount of their stuff. I was able to stuff an entire wedding DJ system into the vehicle with a bit of room to spare. Not bad for 32 miles per gallon.

### In Summary

Overall, this is the ideal size of vehicle for a lot of people, in my opinion. It's big enough to offer comfortable seating for four people and is also able to provide space for a sound system for a typical event. In hybrid form, it gets good mileage and there are so many of these out there in Ford, Mercury and Mazda forms that parts and service should be relatively easy to get. The one main disadvantage was inexcusably lousy brakes.

Join Anthony Barthel on the Curbside for car show schedules, automotive discussions, a photo gallery and more - [www.curbside.tv](http://www.curbside.tv).

## Track the Facts

Base Price: \$25,310
Price as Tested: \$26,905
Major Options: None
Engine: 2.3 L Gasoline Engine and Electric Motor
Transmission: Continuously Variable Automatic
Days on the Curbside: April 2-10
Model Year: 2008

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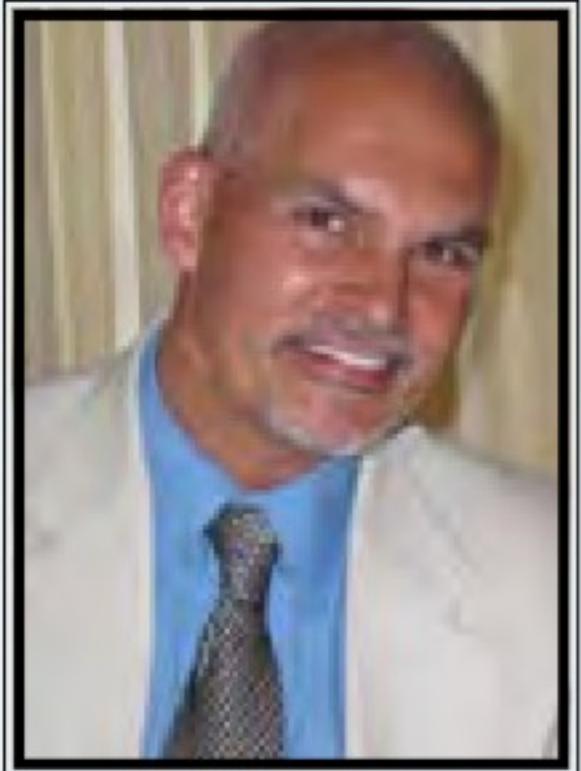
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# A Matter of

R-E-S-P-E-C-T: Find out what it means

By Michael Edwards

In a past article of mine, I recommended that all DJs conduct their business so that they would be "treated with the same respect as other professionals". My feeling was, if you simply conform to the same set of professional standards as any other respected business does, then you will be perceived and treated like those businesses too. It's always worked for me. I never dreamed that such basic advice might be a cause for a heated debate.

In the March issue of Mobile Beat (#113) the editor printed a letter that had been written in response to my article. Comments included statements like: "Mobile DJs don't rank too high on the food chain of respected careers," and "DJs aren't in the same class as doctors, lawyers, accountants," and "...I wonder if we're held in the same regard as realtors or insurance people. Are we in the same class as plumbers, electricians and carpenters... landscapers?"

You get the idea. The writer also mentions his "real world" job, data processing. Funny that he took it upon himself to question the level of respect received by those of us who hold a "real world" job as full-time, professional mobile DJs. His comment that a DJ's "actual work occurs on the weekends" made it clear to me that he didn't fully understand the amount of work (seven days a week) that "real world" DJs put in. For me it's a level of commitment that routinely earns the respect of clients and other professionals who have noticed and commented on the difference

in between what they perceive as a "real" professional disc jockey service and less dedicated hobbyists.

When it comes to dedication and professionalism, I should clarify the terms "full time" and "part time." Most will agree, part-time DJs run the gamut from clueless amateurs who are a continuous, frustrating embarrassment to our industry to those who actually conduct their part-time DJ business and their performances with all the professionalism of full-time DJs, if not more. Each distinct group has earned and deserves a different level of the general public's respect. Mark's comments seem to be making the same mistake that many uninformed clients make: placing all DJs in the same boat—"a DJ is a DJ." Big mistake.

#### What's in a Name

Some professions I can think of DO rank fairly low on the "respect level" list, and have made concerted efforts to reverse that perception. Garbage collectors now call themselves "sanitation engi-

neers". Rest room attendants get a better tip if they are called the "personal valet". Peter Merry has coined the term "Wedding Entertainment Director™" as a way of more accurately acknowledging the full range of services beyond "just music" that top-notch DJs actually provide for a wedding.

Renaming a familiar service can sometimes effect the public's perception of it; but providing a superior service and being recognized among "the best" at your craft is always the best way to gain respect for what you do, whatever your chosen career.

I am reminded of the story of a man who had the very unpleasant job of sweeping up just behind the parade of elephants at the Barnum & Bailey Circus. He carried a big shovel and every time another "steaming pile" appeared in front of him, he would quickly scoop it up and deposit it into his trash barrel on wheels. One day someone asked him, "Why don't you get a different job?" His answer was based on his own perception

# Pride

of his profession: "What...and give up show business?!"

I have to thank the negative letter writer for pointing toward something that I had not even thought about before: DJs of all levels will only ever be respected if we first respect ourselves, and take pride in our profession by showing it every day in the way we conduct our business and represent ourselves to the general public. Has anyone out there ever seen well-known mobile entertainer Marcello Pedalino in cut offs, flip flops and a T-shirt? I didn't think so. (He probably sleeps in 3-piece pajamas.) No one who meets this gentleman ever thinks of him as anything less than a successful DJ and businessman. It's exactly how he sees himself, how he carries himself, and how he presents himself to the world each day. Does that mean DJs everywhere need to run out to Brooks Brothers and drop a grand? No, it just means you may need to adjust your attitude about yourself, the image in your mind of what you do for a living and your status within this industry. DJs are not second-class citizens, and any DJ who thinks that way either has very low self-esteem or has only had experiences with DJ amateurs who lack the professionalism (and income) of legitimate, professional mobile DJs. Don't put up with that kind of prejudice!

#### **Example of the Possible**

Many DJs are "doctor/lawyer" successful--well-

accepted and fully integrated into the business community where they work or live. I can attest to a local DJ who in 1994 was simultaneously on the Board of Directors of the local Chamber of Commerce, Program Director for the local Rotary International Club, President of the Metro North Unit of the American Cancer Society, all while running a successful seven-DJ multi-op business. Ten years earlier, he had graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Pre-Med degree, but decided against a career in medicine because he realized that with hard work and good business practices he could actually make the same amount of money or more doing what he loved. Using "real world" business practices, he was soon established and thriving in the musical entertainment business.

#### **Learning to Earn**

If the general public has a preconceived, low level of respect for our industry, it's up to each one of us to operate at a level of professionalism that will completely reverse their misconception...one person at a time, all day, every day we are in this business.

You are helping yourself AND the perception of the DJ industry if you have ever heard customer comments like: "Wow, you got back to me so quickly" or "We appreciate the fact that you're meeting with us after your normal office hours" or "I didn't know so much planning went into a party...I'm sure glad we found you" or "We

really appreciated the way you made us feel like our wedding was as important to you as it was to us."

Do you think any of those people now disrespect the entire DJ profession?

If you are not enjoying respect in your DJ career, realize that you must earn it. It is yours for the taking. Provide great service for appropriate compensation. Tell clients the truth about all the things you offer and play up your strong points without putting down the competition. They'll respect you more. Care about what you do and how you are seen.

The way that we, as an industry, are perceived, must start with self-image... and anyone who incorrectly applies a warped and ill-conceived, stereotypical loser image to all DJs has not got an accurate grasp on the level of professionalism, respect and success that is attainable and already exists for many within this industry.

Every DJ reading this has the power to change the public's perception of DJs! **MB**

*Michael Edwards is the president of Michael Edwards Enterprises, inc. and owner of [www.getadj.com](http://www.getadj.com), [www.djslastminute.com](http://www.djslastminute.com) and [www.djbids.com](http://www.djbids.com). Full-time since 1979, Mike is one of 21 AllStar DJs at his agency in Andover, MA. A member of the Mobile Beat Advisory Board & the American Disc Jockey Association, Mike can be contacted at his office at 978-470-4700 or emailed at [BostonsBestDJs@aol.com](mailto:BostonsBestDJs@aol.com).*



# Being a DJ **Is** a **Real Job!**

For the outside observer, a peak inside a DJ's workaday world

By Stu Chisholm

**T**he other day, a friend called me at about noon and said, "Hey, do you want to go to the movies? I've got the day off and I'm bored."

"No," I said, "I'm busy with work."

Then my friend of 24 years said, "What work? You only work one or two days a week!" Welcome to my world: the world of the professional mobile DJ.

This exchange got me thinking: If a close friend thinks this way, what are the chances that my clients do, too? After all, that is how it looks to a casual observer! I only jump in the van and go to a job on weekends. The rest of the week I'm at home...doing all of the things that nobody sees.



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In reality, I put in close to 70 hours per week working on my DJ business. And yes, it is a business, with all of the work associated with other small businesses. The only real differences are that I don't have to drive to my job (except for the weekend parties), punch a clock or answer to a boss beyond my own clients. I set my own schedule, but if I neglect anything important, my business could fail and my job would disappear. I can't blame any board of directors or supervisors for bad decisions. My success or failure is in my hands, and no matter how successful I might be, it can evaporate in an instant if I lose focus.

#### Way More than Just a Party Hat

At a party, I've got to be the fun, personable and sometimes downright crazy host, keeping the energy and excitement levels high. In my home office, that part of my personality has to take a back seat to the disciplined business jack-of-all trades. As a single operator I wear all the hats: I'm the secretary who answers the phone; the salesman who makes the pitch to customers who call or e-mail; the engineer who builds the systems and maintains the equipment; the buyer who procures the gear, music and supplies; the accountant riding herd on the finances; the mechanic who maintains the vehicle; the IT tech who enters data, maintains the websites and gives clients "customer support"; the file clerk in charge of the "mail room," filling requests for information packets, writing and mailing contracts and making runs to the P.O. box; the advertising director designing and placing all of the advertising and promotion; the writer who scripts the events and, on occasion, contributes to a DJ trade publication; the producer who edits and occasionally remixes music; and the "gofer" who schleps the tuxedo to the cleaners, picks up the office supplies and other errand running. All of these activities being punctuated by the ringing telephone, client meetings and trying to slip in lunch and dinner!

In this light, it can sound a bit overwhelming! Yet, if broken down and placed into an itinerary of sorts, it can be done, and done well. My typical week looks like this:

**MONDAY:** Office day. While I generally start each day by first checking for phone and e-mail messages, on Monday I then attack any and all paperwork that needs to be done. This means writing up and mailing out contracts and requests for information, adding the client information from the weekend's parties to my client database and sending out a thank you card and review. I'll also make follow-up phone calls to potential clients. Next, it's time to enter all of the music that came in over the past week into my music database, which I use in my performances and my clients can view online. Most importantly, Monday is also when I pull out the paperwork for the event(s) coming up on the weekend after next. This gives me a two-week time window to familiarize myself in detail with the event specifics, add any needed music to my buy list and plan my party itinerary.

**TUESDAY:** Equipment and music production day. Each weekend when the equipment goes out, it gets jostled around. It picks up dust from people dancing, or from being outdoors. There are software updates to be made, batteries to be replaced and the occasional modification or addition. On most Tuesdays this isn't an all day pursuit, so I then consult my "to do" list and work on any productions that are on my schedule. This can be something as simple as tactfully removing a cuss word from a popular song to mastering and duplicating 250 CDs that a couple or organization wants to hand out as souvenirs at an event.

**WEDNESDAY:** Errand and promotion day. This is usually the day for runs to

the dry cleaners, post office, office supply store, etc. If there's an oil change to be made or other vehicle maintenance required, it gets attention on hump-day. I also think "promotion" on Wednesdays because this is when I might visit a banquet hall, bridal boutique or other vendor I'm promoting (or wanting to promote) with. This has been true of Wednesdays since I first began my business and drove all over town putting my cards into those free ad racks at the supermarket! Once back at home, I turn my focus to calling magazines, bridal show organizers or other people I'm advertising with, working my website, etc. I also try to fit in some writing, since advertising and promotion stimulates my creativity!

**THURSDAY:** Music day. During a typical week, my desk gets loaded-up with CDs. I also have a substantial backlog of non-priority material, mostly vinyl records, that need to be listened to and databased. The music is crankin'! If I need to make a run to the music store, or visit any online music stores, it will happen today. While listening, I gather information about each song, such as the style, BPM (beats per minute) and chart info which will later be entered into my database the following Monday. Thursday is also the day I contact my clients for this week's party or parties to go over the details of the event, Google a map, etc.

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY:** Gig day / mop-up. On most weekends I'll have an event scheduled and like to use the time beforehand to go over the details, names of the bridal party (if it's a wedding) and various activities. I'll also be packing my tux and primping! When I do have a weekend day off, I'll use the time to tackle anything that didn't get finished over the week. It's also a good idea to schedule client meetings on these days, since a lot of people can't meet during a weekday.

**SUNDAY:** Reserved! Yes, Sunday is the one day of the week I reserve for myself! On rare occasion, if a client can't meet with me during the week and there's no available Saturday, I may schedule a meeting then.

I can only imagine what my friends who own a multi-DJ company go through! Add scheduling and training responsibilities to all of the above, and multiply things like equipment maintenance and music library updates by however many DJs they have, it would take quite a team to pull off!

When I worked at GM in the '70s and early '80s, I never worked as hard as I do now! Yet I've never loved my job as much either. Being a people

person and music maven, it's the intangible aspects of being a DJ that provide the biggest rewards. Nobody ever got rich in the mobile DJ business—just check the Fortune 500. It's a sure bet that DJs who have a long career love their work! It's a job—a REAL job—and like any other would suffer if I took time to goof off when I should be working! If you're not a DJ and know one, or any other type of self-employed person, keep this in mind before interrupting their day. If you're a potential client, then keep in mind the tremendous value that the professional mobile DJ represents!

**MB**

*Stu Chisholm, a mobile DJ since 1979, has also been a nightclub DJ in suburban Detroit. He has also done some radio, commercial voice-over work and has even worked a roller skating rink! Stu attended the famous Specs Howard School of Broadcasting and has been a music collector*



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# Pro DJ FILES

**M**any of you know Mike Walter from his contributions to mobile DJ publications (including the ADJA Newsletter, found in each issue of MB), and also in person from his appearances at the national DJ conferences, either as an attendee, seminar speaker or showcase performer. Here we get a brief glimpse of the road that this highly successful DJ/MC and multi-system owner has traveled to get to where he is today.



**RB: When and how did you get into the Mobile DJ business?**

MW: In 1988, I had graduated from Connecticut School of Broadcasting thinking I'd be a radio DJ. Star DJs, which was the biggest New Jersey mobile DJ company back then, used to have an agreement with CSB that they could come in and recruit the graduates. So it became a choice: Toil away for years and years in radio with no guarantee of ever going anywhere, or get started right away in a fun and lucrative career. It was actually a no-brainer.

**RB: What made you decide it was time to go out on your own? And how did you do it?**

MW: Without getting into too many details, the owners at Star DJs started making some big mistakes and after four years I didn't like where the company was headed. I decided to leave and joined a much smaller company (Elite Entertainment) that was being run by an ex-Star DJ who I had kept in touch with. Elite was floundering along because the guy who owned it, who I became partners with, is a

# Entertaining with the Elite

From broadcast school to multi-op mastery: Mike Walter and Elite Entertainment **By Ryan Burger**

tremendous talent but he has no management skills at all. So it was a good relationship while it lasted but then he wanted to get into motivational speaking, so I bought him out in 1998 and since then I have been sole owner of Elite.

**RB: What are your primary markets? (ie. wedding receptions, corporate events, etc.)?**

MW: Elite Entertainment does mostly wedding receptions. Two-thirds of our events and almost 80% of our revenue is generated through weddings.

**RB: What equipment do you use?**

MW: Denon CD player, Rane mixer, JBL speakers, Shure microphone. (Haven't gone digital yet but a lot of my staff has.)

**RB: How many systems and employees or subcontractors do you have?**

MW: I have 20 emcees who we book on events. I employ about 35-40 people in the busy months, since I need assistants for almost every party.

**RB: Any lighting or video?**

MW: We use some intelligent lighting and plasma screens but only when it's booked by the client, which is rare.

**RB: What do you think of the move that a lot of Wedding DJs are making by adding video content to their wedding receptions?**

MW: I think it's great. We haven't gotten into it on a grand scale but if it's one more thing to offer a bride that's always a good thing.

**RB: What's unique about Elite Entertainment?**

MW: We've combined quality and quantity in a way that is rare. There are some great individual DJs in our market but the multi-ops that we compete with all seem to be bottom-feeders. What we offer the bride is great talent and one on one service, yet with the security of a large company. Based on doing over 1000 events every year since 1999, I think it's a winning combination.

**RB: What are your shows like?**

MW: Our entertainment style is whatever the clients wants. I will lead every line dance in the world if they want me to. I will hand out maracas and leis and YMCA hats if that's the level of interaction they expect. But if they want it more elegant I can do that too. I have plenty of clients who tell me they want a good mix of music and some smooth introduction and that's it. I'm definitely a chameleon in that regard. I blend in and can be whatever my clients want me to be.

**RB: What geographical area do you serve?**

MW: The Jersey Shore. Bruce Springsteen and Jon Bon Jovi land. We venture into Philly and Manhattan from time to time but it's mostly here in New Jersey and even more specifically the Shore area.

**RB: Any interesting anecdotes or unusual past events come to mind?**

MW: I did a wedding 12 years ago for one of the most beautiful brides I'd ever seen. She was enchanting. I bumped into her a few years later at a wedding and she was just as gorgeous then as she'd been on her wedding day. A few years later I heard through the grapevine that she was getting divorced. I was in between relationships at the time myself so I made it my mission to find her. We've been together now for 5 years.

**RB: You've previously mentioned to me that you are charging \$1,750 while the average in your area is \$1,000. How do you convince people to pay 50% to 75% more for your service? What are your major selling points?**

MW: Quality and one-on-one service. When people see us perform live they usually see the difference, and then the price is less of an issue, especially for weddings

**RB: What are some of the ways you advertise and promote your business?**

MW: We do tons of showcases. We do bridal shows and in-house shows as well. To me there is nothing like the live experience to show clients exactly what you can do for them. Plus we network very aggressively with banquet people and photographers and anyone else who is in touch with brides. Finally, these days, it's all about the internet. I try to get as many brides to my site as possible.

**RB: What are some of your business and personal goals for the near future?**

MW: As far as Elite Entertainment goes, we just want to keep growing and doing well. We do that by focusing on what we do best, which is weddings. My experience at Star DJs taught me how bad things can get when you take your eye off the business and put your focus onto other things. I will never make that mistake.

Personally, I've begun running marathons in the past three years and have made it a long term goal to run one in every state. I'm up to nine states now and I can do about five or six a year. So, at my current age I think I can run my 50th state right around my 50th birthday. **MB**



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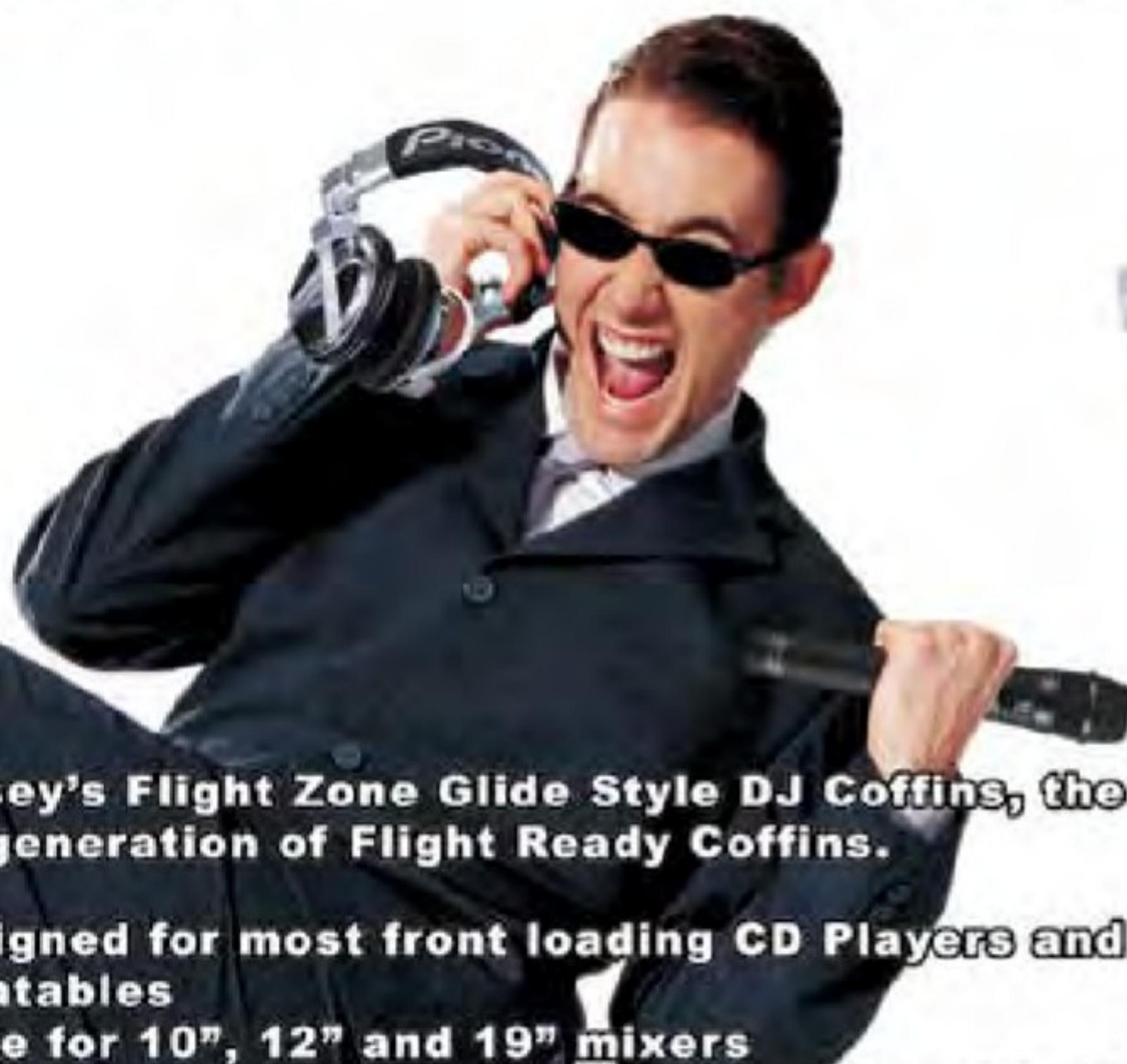
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# III-Advised Marketing

Don't sabotage your success with faulty thinking

By Jay Conrad Levinson

**W**hat's nearly as bad a no marketing at all? It's ill-advised marketing. Guerrillas market like crazy, but none of it is ill-advised.

Many a hard-working, well-meaning, marketing-minded business owner will sabotage their business with ill-advised marketing. That's even worse than no marketing because bad marketing is incredibly expensive.

Ill-advised marketing is usually the result of a personality flaw in the business owner. The most common flaw by far is impatience. So many entrepreneurs are dazzled at the prospect of instant gratification that when they don't get it, they begin their marketing campaign again, never giving it a chance to take hold and soar.

#### Check Your Ego

Another all-to-common personality hang-up is an ego the size of Alaska. Business owners figure that they know finance and they know management, therefore they also know marketing. Not true. They may know marketing as it existed when they embarked upon the road of individual enterprise, but you and I know how much marketing has changed since then.

Often, their humungous egos motivate them to write their own marketing copy, design their own ads and websites, and select media based upon their own personal tastes rather than the tastes of their prospects and customers. Those egos often beckon them to become their own pitchmen in the mass media. Sometimes that works. Usually, it blows up in their kisser.

Another personality blemish that puts marketing on self-destruct is the ridiculous notion that word-of-mouth will do the trick all by itself. And then there's the crazy companion notion that

everybody already knows all the reasons why they should do business with you.

#### Never Assume

Want another nutty personality defect possessed by the losers? It's thinking that they simply can't render better customer service than they're providing right now. Don't ever think that thought. There is always room for improvement. Just ask any customer. Ask them, perhaps with your questionnaire, how an ideal business such as yours would be run. Be ready for true enlightenment when they tell you.

Of course, conceit ranks high on the list of personality blotches—the conceit to think that people want to know all about you right off the bat, that they care about you more than they care about themselves, that their time is your time and that they don't know the amateurishness when they see it.

And still another impediment to marketing success is being too good a consumer. Such business owners fall prey to lots of fast-talking media reps and buy things they don't really need. Or they spend too much on the production of their marketing materials. Have the insight to remember always that there is no marketing strategy strong enough to withstand the personality of a clueless business owner.

#### Getting to Know Them

There's an old adage that says that it's better to know something about your spouse than everything about marriage. Same is true for marketing. Guerrillas have gobs of information about their customers because if they didn't, their marketing wisdom would be for naught. Marketing is a pipe with you on one end and your customers on the other. It does not exist in a vacuum and it does have a goal. To reach that goal, personal data about each customer is mandatory. Knowing them as a group helps a little but not nearly as much as knowing them individually.

Gain that information by talking with them, listening to what they say, sending them customer questionnaires, visiting their websites, meeting them at community events and trade shows, and making yourself available to them for any dialogue they wish to initiate.

An important guerrilla's insight is that the more you know about individual customers, the better you are able to custom-tailor your marketing. As you custom-tailor it, the marketing becomes more effective and economical at the same time. Instead of doing a mailing to all of your customers, you mail to only those customers who you know will be interested in what you're now offering. That cuts down on your cost while increasing your response rate.

When you know specific customers are interested in baseball or opera, you can send them tickets to such events—or gifts that connect with their interest. When you read of them or one of their family achieving something that's worth publicity, you acknowledge the achievement with a call or a note. How many huge companies can do that? That's one of your advantages as a small, customer-centered business.

Knowing details about your customers enables you to connect more closely with them, and adapt your conversations with them to their own personality types. If they are Type A people, always in a hurry, that's your cue to keep it short and do it quickly. If they are deliberate, studious, now you know to give them all the facts they need and not speed through your presentation.

Personal knowledge about individual customers enriches your customer list exponentially. You know what they like, what they read, what they watch, what excites them, what turns them off, where they shop, how they perceive your business, tiny details that make the difference between one-time buyers and lifelong customers. Best of all, guerrillas have fun learning that information, connecting with other people with the goal of mutual satisfaction. **MB**



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# The Future Is Now

An experienced video jock discusses the growth of the visual option for DJs

By Mike "Dr. Frankenstand" Ryan

// **V**ideo Killed the Radio Star," the 1979 song\* by the British group Buggles featured lyrics about a period of technological change in the 1960s. Today, over four decades later, video is again poised, hopefully not to kill, but certainly to change another kind of star: the mobile DJ. What does the current video revolution mean to the typical mobile entertainer? The following interview focuses on the use of video and features DJ/VJ Eric Sands of Sundance Productions in southern California. Not only is Sands a bar and bat mitzvah specialist, he is a pioneer in the use of video in the mobile arena.

**MB: What's your wide-angle view for the future of video in the mobile DJ Industry?**

Sands: The future is now! Video is solidly ingrained into our daily lives (YouTube, CNN's News to Me, America's Funniest Videos, MySpace, to name a few examples). In the '70s we had DJ mixers. In the '80s, we had lighting. In the '90s, we had crowd interaction. The new millennium brought us computer-driven technology. Video is clearly in all of our futures. Hyper-stimulated, bipolar kids who can't sit still today are your clients of tomorrow!

**MB: Speaking of kids, do they now expect to have video at their parties? Do you predict a time**

*when if we don't offer video we will go the way of the Beta Cam?*

Sands: Yes—and I think that time is now! If your clients embrace the power that computer-driven, multi-media production provides at their celebrations, then they may not feel comfortable hiring someone using '80s or '90s technology.

**MB: Are DJs who use video (VJs) becoming true specialists like karaoke jocks (KJs)?**

Sands: I think we're all still on the same boat sailing to the same destination. Our goals are not dissimilar...We are providing entertainment the best way we are individually able to. But, as in the past, some of us are paddling faster, and accordingly, will reap the fruits of future market recognition sooner.

**MB: How fast and to what extent is the use of video developing?**

Sands: Just look at the sales of plasma screens, projectors, home theaters, and high-definition TV. Video has proliferated within the average American lifestyle, everywhere...in our cars, on our phones and computers...even home appliances are starting to incorporate video interfaces. (Microsoft predicts future homes will use more "smart" appliances, including interactive wallpaper being developed by companies such as Phillips to serve as giant displays for pictures from a MySpace page or even video).

**MB: How do you see video, as party entertainment, evolving in the future?**

Sands: I see much more flexible and easier set-up, such as being able to present video in a day-lit room without having to carry 5,000+ lumen projectors or heavy plasma screens. I see more real-time effects, such as brides and grooms being wished well and congratulated via live, off-site simulcast by wedding guests who can't attend the reception. And for the higher-end clients, I see an MC/DJ combo be-

ing replaced by an MC/production manager in constant communication via headsets with a staff who will control stage lighting, video content, sound, and flow of the event—much like at an awards show. *[This is a role that Sands has himself pioneered. -Ed.]*

**MB: Do you see a time when live video interaction at parties will become so popular that clients will outsource it away from the DJ/VJ like some planners do with lighting?**

Sands: I think you always have that risk if you're "out of your envelope"...that is, if you are booking higher-end parties without being able to offer the most efficient solution to meet the client's needs. But that's not necessarily a bad thing...it enables you to stay in your "core" business of what you do best—MC-based entertainment. Same old story, if you can't handle one aspect of a job, sub it out.

**MB: Talking about video production, how and when do you use roving live cameras and/or music videos in your shows?**

Sands: I always have some form of content on the screen, whether it's live camera simulcast, ambient themed visuals, music videos, photo-stills, or a custom DVD effect loop that I create for the client and is in repeat mode for the entire party. This way, there is no "dead-air" on the video screen, and there is always something visual happening. In addition, my video assistant is at the mixing console monitoring and mixing the optimum source for any given time. Often we use chroma-key effects superimposed on top of the live camera feed to make it interesting.

**MB: How available are music videos and are there any legal issues involved in using them?**

Sands: I subscribe to the Promo Only Hot Video series, although I know there are several subscription services out there. I imagine the legal issues are very similar to audio copying,



## DOING RIGHT **VIDEO** A FEW TIPS FROM ERIC SANDS...

Do NOT point the video camera directly towards your video screen / plasma...you get a weird looking video feedback.

Do NOT point the video camera at kids while they are slow dancing.

Do NOT use a camera operator who cannot hold his/her hand steady (or, DO use a monopod, if necessary)

Do NOT zoom in and out excessively on the live camera.

DO have two separate people mixing video content and shooting with the live cam.

DO carry a spare projector and bulbs.

DO test all equipment well before start time.

backing up, etc.

**MB: How do you handle PG-rated music videos?**

Sands: We try to keep it clean, relatively speaking. But occasionally, there's some "unexpected" content on the music video. So that's another reason to have immediate access to alternate sources you can transition to quickly.

**MB: What are the critical things DJs should know about video gear performance?**

Sands: Like audio, back-up equipment is necessary. I keep my video mixing console separate from my normal audio system. So at a video show, I actually have two consoles set up side by side. This keeps the show really tight, and serves as instant back up at least for audio, which is more noticeable to a crowd if it should fail. If you are mixing numerous sources (live camera, music video mixing software, ambient visuals, slide show loops, etc.), then each one of those can "fill in" if another one goes bad. But I always carry a spare projector to my gigs, as well as a spare music-only laptop based system in the event of a more catastrophic failure.

**MB: Any tips on video gear? What are the bare necessities to be considered "professional?"**

Sands: I think as a bare minimum, you should have a CORE DUO processor-based computer with a minimum of 256MB of dedicated video RAM driving your music videos, with sufficient ambient background video to fill in when you are playing non-music videos. If you are using DVD players, then make sure you get the type that [can] pause on cue, rather than play on cue.

If you are doing live CAM, then there's really no excuse to be relying on that cheesy-looking, jittery webcam that so many people rely on. Video cameras are getting so dirt cheap; this is the better way to go. I use a wireless

diversity microwave link for our 3-chip camera. This enables us to be anywhere in the room "getting the action" where it's happening, without the constraint of a fat video cable trailing behind the camera man.

**MB: How receptive have you clients been to video as an "up-sell?"**

Sands: It's an option that I really try to encourage for parties of over 125 people, which are most parties. I think that once the client sees how beautifully video can bring the event to an-

If your clients embrace the power that computer-driven, multi-media production provides at their celebrations, then they may not feel comfortable hiring someone using '80s or '90s technology.

other level, they agree that it's well worth the additional expense.

**MB: How much extra, on average, can a DJ/VJ expect to make by incorporating video?**

Sands: I think it largely depends on the scope of what he or she is doing. If you're only playing

music videos, with no other content, then really we're just talking about setting up a plasma or projector/screen combo above and beyond the usual set up—maybe \$500 to \$1,000 additional, depending on what part of the country you're in. But if you're actually monitoring and mixing numerous sources and applying real-time effects, then that's another level up, and you could get \$1,000 to \$2,000 additional.

If you are producing custom content such as wedding montages and promotional videos for corporate receptions, you can usually get \$50 to \$200 per finished minute, depending on your editing skills.

**MB: By including video are you taking work away from videographers?**

Sands: We really aren't doing the same thing, nor can we. We are presenting video content for the purpose of visual entertainment. Videographers, on the other hand, are in the archiving business. They are recording what is happened for viewing in the future. Any videographer who feels intimidated by this does not understand the big picture.

**MB: How competitive do you think VJing will become?**

Sands: The truth is that currently, the equipment involved in doing a decent video show is a bit complex for many DJs, especially if you are trying to do it computer-based. So I think in the near term, we are establishing who the main players will be. But in the next couple of years, we will have a critical mass of DJs offering this service, creating more competition as more DJs make the technical transition required to do the job competently. **MB**

\*The "Video Killed the Radio Star" music video was the first one to be shown on MTV's premier show, in August 1981. In February 2000 it also became MTV's one-millionth video to be aired.

# Wedding Video Crosses the Threshold

Using video to the max in the wedding industry

By Charlie Petrach

**T**here are so many ways video could be making an impact at your wedding receptions, and if you are not using video, and selling it to your clients, you should be. Right now, for example, I'm putting together a photo montage (slide show) for the Father/Daughter dance. Typically, this is a powerful and EMOTIONAL tool that will help generate you more referrals, but this one is different. The bride's father passed away a few years ago, and in lieu of the traditional Father/Daughter dance, we are going to just play the montage and dedicate it to her father. Do you think there might be a few tears shed?

The power of the "custom" first dance song has been ringing through our industry for several years now. Imagine adding video to that already emotional moment at the reception. Instead of just showing the traditional photo montage during dinner, this can be designed to go in sync with the custom-recorded first dance song. Their guests will be captivated by the music and imagery that is displayed before them, and when the tenderest visual moments combine with the right lyrics, a collective "Awww" will be heard, followed by applause.

#### I Don't Want My MTV

The old notion held by wedding couples and some DJs, that adding video at the reception will mean playing MTV-style music videos all night, is changing right in front of our eyes, thanks in part to photographers, videographers, and Apple computer owners that are putting together and displaying their creations at the wedding. I don't think I've ever had a couple ask for just music videos at their reception. They usually start off by just wanting a photo montage shown, and at the early planning stages, are not quite sure if they will need to do it themselves, or ask their ph-



tographer and/or videographer. When we step in, we let them know that not only can we show the montage on our big screen at their reception, we can also put it together for them.

Now that their initial needs have been met, it is time to let them know how else you can use video to ENHANCE their entertainment experience and make their reception even more memorable: "As your guests are arriving during the cocktail hour, we will be showing clips from your wedding ceremony for those who want to reminisce or who couldn't be there. Following dinner, we will show the custom photo montage that we put together from those fabulous photos you provided. Then we'll proceed right into your custom first song, where photos or video clips of your wedding will be displayed as you dance. The Father/Daughter and Mother/Son dance will follow, displaying custom photos, or if you wish, a live video camera capturing the emotional moment on the screen."

#### Picturing the Party

Don't forget the bridal party! They have been the couple's "backbone" all day and for the months leading up to the wedding. It is time to do something special for them as well. Get photos and fun

descriptions of each couple and how they relate to the bride and groom. Also, find out about their favorite songs or movies. We will put together a custom introduction video incorporating all of this material, then go right into the bridal party dance song. This makes them feel special and appreciated for being a part of the big day. It also will make a nice gift to give them following the reception. The custom introduction video can be a nice selling feature that could earn you some extra bucks, especially when making 20 copies for the bridal party at \$20 each.

For the rest of the reception, we will incorporate our "live" video camera to capture all of the fun and excitement on the big screen. Plus we will mix in some of favorite music videos with ambient imagery or ceremony clips. Another selling option would be to include a DVD of the camera footage that was taken.

#### Cue Video

The first step is to be able to provide a screen and projector or TV monitors. You can purchase them yourself or rent them each time to get started. Next, I would recommend getting a video camera. Something simple with good picture quality in low light will work. If you plan on selling a DVD of the live footage, you could get one that will make the DVD instantly, or use a simple camera-to-DVD burner combination.

You don't need to be a video editing expert to put together a fun and entertaining presentation, but experience does help. We do the photo montage editing ourselves but we could still make money by outsourcing it to a photographer or videographer. Most videographers or guests at the wedding will have no problem letting you show some raw footage they took at the ceremony. Just make sure it is what the bride and groom want, and have them ask the person if it would be all right for you to hook their camera up to your video system during dinner. It doesn't matter what size video screen or flat screen monitors that you use, its how creative you can be when using video to the max at your wedding receptions. **MB**

Charlie Petrach is owner/operator of The Party Company, LLC in Racine, Wisconsin. Providing video entertainment at weddings since the early 90's, his company is the 2008 Pick for "The Knot - Best of Weddings." See the previous issue of Mobile Beat (May 2008, Issue 114) for a profile of Charlie and his business.

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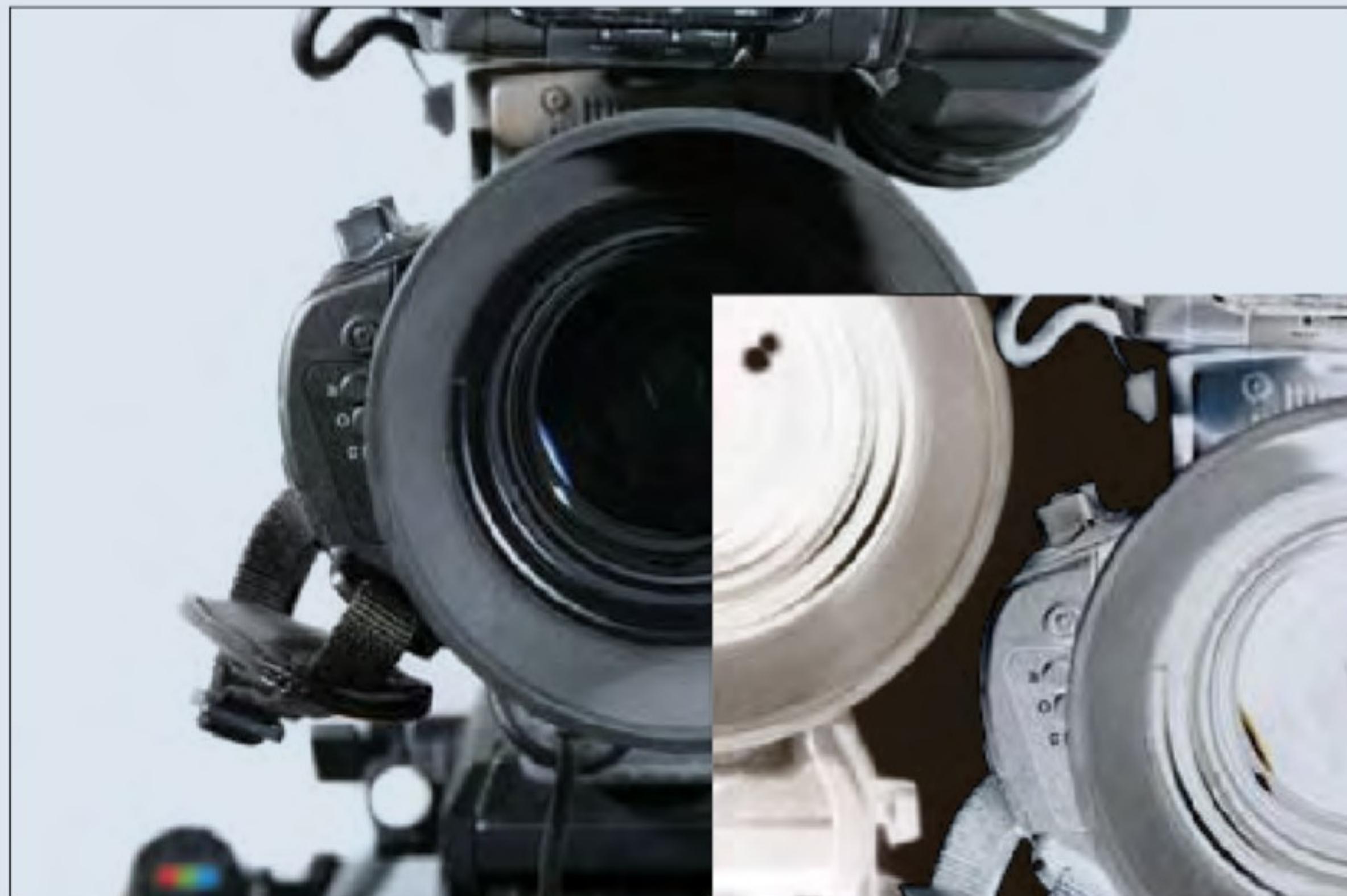
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# Building Your Video Advantage

Options for up-selling schools into video dance parties

By Dave Parks



**S**o you have been rocking your school dances for years with an awesome sound and light show, and now you are looking for something new and fresh to take your dance to the next level. Well, it's time to start thinking video. Using video adds a whole new dimension to your school dance. It can be a "show within a show" or it can even become a part of your light show.

## Getting Set Up

You don't have to spend a fortune to begin to make the jump into basic video for your school events. All you need to start is a projector, screen, DVD player, an A/B switch, video camera and some S-video cable. Any projector with over 2000 lumens works well. If you can't afford a big projection screen, then you can start with something simple such as the Stretch Screen from [www.djscreen.com](http://www.djscreen.com), which is a spandex-style stretch screen that can be attached to a simple tripod lighting truss system. Extra advantages of

this product are that it is flame resistant and has sewn-in anchor points. For a DVD player, you can buy almost any one on the market, but make sure it reads DVDR+/-; this type is essential if you are going to be creating custom photo montages. As for a video camera, you can use one that you

might have around the house for personal use. Prices for video cameras have dropped significantly in recent months and many now have built-in hard drives. After the event, you can make copies.

There are several ways that you can step up your video show. Some firms use projectors and big screens, while others have moved up to plasmas. Depending on the model, some brands of plasmas can be linked to create 4-screen or 9-screen video walls. If space is an issue, then

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consider plasmas, because they take up less space than a projector. However, plasmas are also more fragile and less compact.

#### Going to School

When I sell the "video option" to schools, I sell my video show as something unique and different that will take their dance to the next level. There are some students who have never seen a video show before. If they like it, then they are going to want over and over again. I have had many schools rebook numerous times. Every dance that has had video has increased attendance for them. The result is more revenue from their school dance and more profit for me.

Steve Lynch of Atlanta's Extreme Entertainment says video up-sells itself. "No one else in the market was offering video, so this was a way to give schools a 'WOW factor'

EVI-D70, which looks like a moving head lighting fixture and is controlled by something similar to a television remote. This is probably one of the best and most popular cameras used today and works exceptionally well in low-light areas. As mentioned earlier, you can take a home video camera and create a "crowd cam." Have an assistant walk around and film the crowd. As technology improves and prices drop, wireless technology for cameras is a short distance away. This concept will become even more appealing when it's a "live feed."

**Shadow Dancers:** This is a great product. It is a DVD video with silhouettes of men, women, couples and kids dancing with groovy backgrounds moving behind them. As your audience watches these, they start trying to copy the virtual dancers' moves. This video is something that you can run on your

gives them something to do and is especially popular with the kids who come to the dance but don't always dance. At the end of the night, you can send a message to everyone who came and thank them for attending. And this product is a great marketing tool, allowing you to put up your own text messages promoting future events, etc.

**Photo Montages:** Proms and other end-of-the-year events are full of memories. Prior to the event, you can gather photographs from the students and put them together in a photo montage. Most computers now come with a DVD burner and some type of software to put these together. Sometimes, schools like to create their own photo montages. This is a great opportunity to offer some of the services listed above, along with playing their photo montage. The school will not have to worry about setting up a screen.



and set my business apart from the competition." He says that when you meet with the class advisor and the student representatives, make sure that you bring photos. "Talk to the students and explain to them that it's their event and they are going to be the decision makers. Everyone wants to have a memorable event and video adds that unique component."

#### Visual Arsenal

As music videos become more suggestive and sometimes offensive, there are many other ways to make your video show be the hit of the school event without getting into trouble with the school administration or parents. Here are some ideas...

**Live Cameras:** Film the crowd and students dancing. Every student wants to be up on the big screen and feel like a star. One camera that works great for this is the Sony

video screens between the live camera shots. (Check it out at [www.promoonly.com](http://www.promoonly.com))

**Ambient Videos:** These are great videos of shapes, designs, color and pictures that are shown on the screen. This video can also create a mini light show and a one-of-a-kind effect. **Promo Only**, ([www.promoonly.com](http://www.promoonly.com)), offers some great ambient video DVDs. With the right video mixing equipment, you can use blue and green screen technology and have borders around your live camera shots.

**Text Live:** Another great product to add to your video show is **Text Live**, ([www.textlive.com](http://www.textlive.com)). Almost every student has a cell phone and sends text messages these days. This product allows them to send a text message to your big screen. You can preview and edit the text messages before they appear and also do voting and trivia question games. This product works great as an icebreaker while kids are entering the dance. The messaging

Another creative option is a themed montage. For example, I have a prom with a "Las Vegas" theme. Throughout the evening, different photos of the Las Vegas skyline appear on the screens.

After reading this, if you still can't afford to make the jump into video, then consider partnering with a company that offers video services in your area, or rent the video equipment to use yourself. Video can be an expensive add-on to your business. But, if you do it right, it can be very rewarding and help you build new school clients, as well as impress your current ones. **MB**

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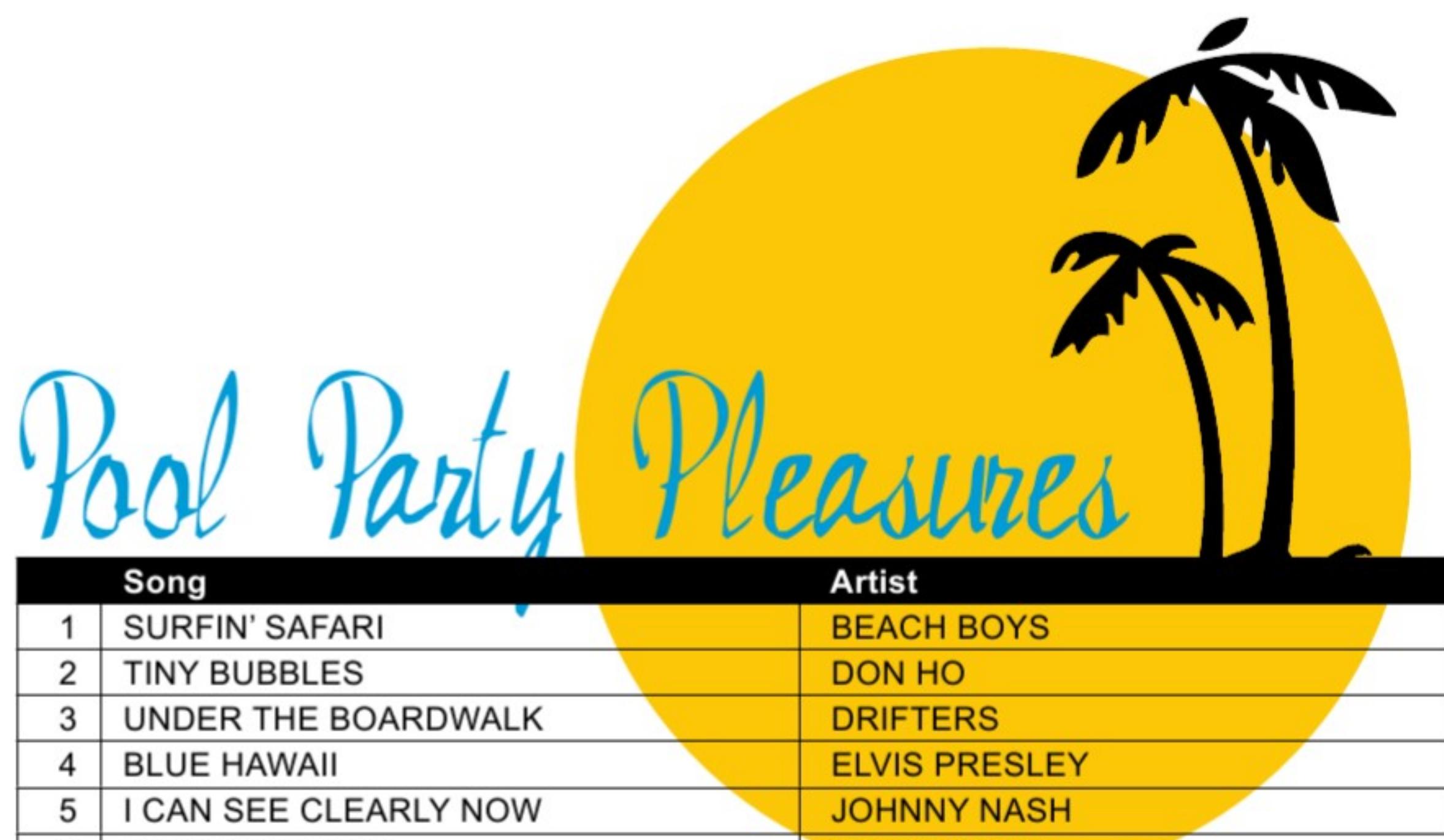


# Grass Skirts, Surfin' and Sandy Shores

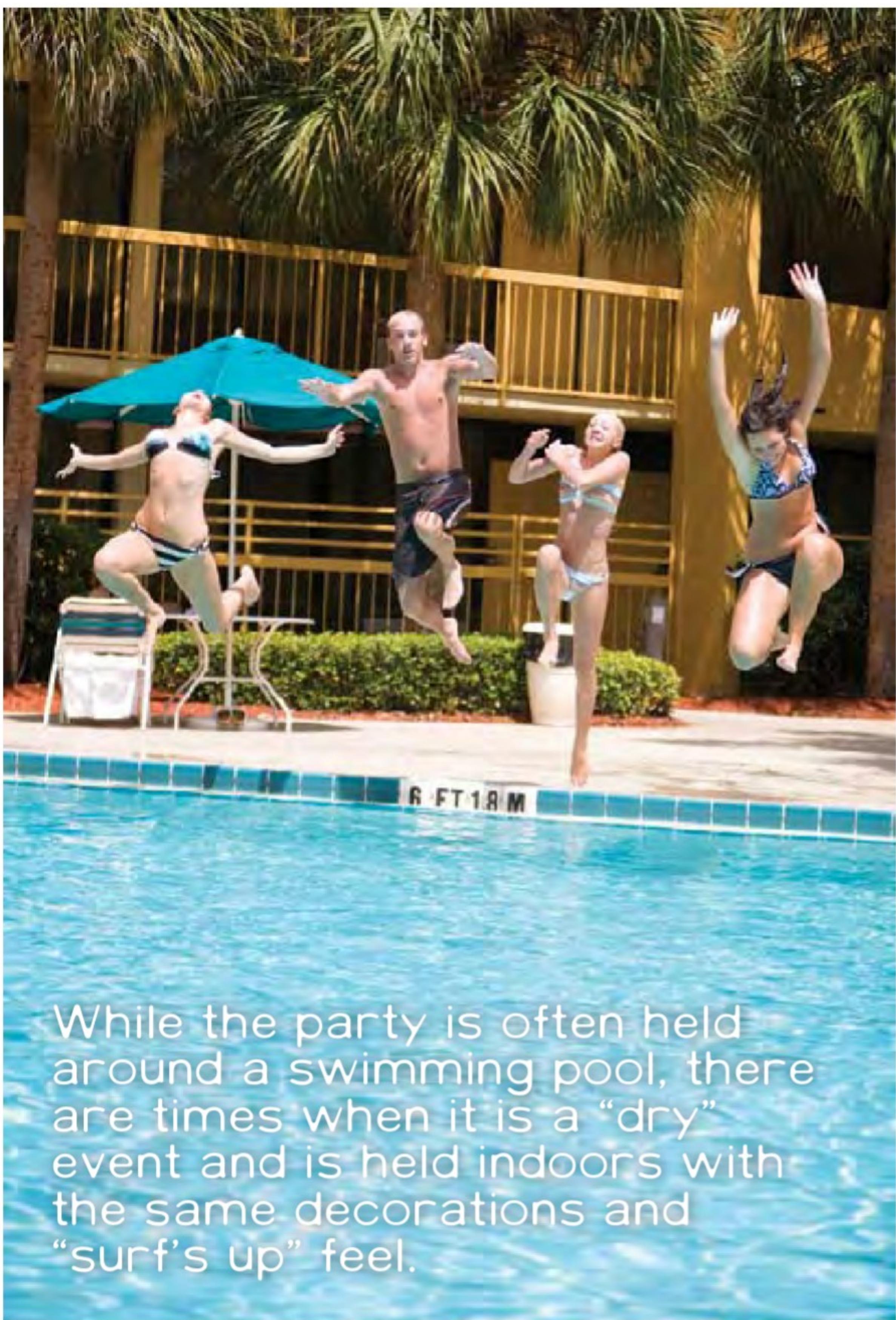
Music for a  
summertime party

By Jay Maxwell

For many years, when I visited my home town in southwest Georgia, and told them that I was a mobile disc jockey, it would require some further explanation. Their typical thoughts when I initially told them that I owned a disc jockey company were that I operated a radio station. Since I was a DJ during high school in the mid-70s on WBBK radio, that response was certainly warranted. My response was of course to inform them that a mobile DJ would take equipment and music to the event, such as a wedding or school party and play music for the party so that people could dance. In a single sentence, that helped explain to them what a mobile DJ does. Of course a mobile DJ does a lot more than that short line states, but if you've ever had to briefly explain what you do to someone who doesn't have a clue, then chances are you mentioned "playing music for people to dance to."



Song	Artist
1 SURFIN' SAFARI	BEACH BOYS
2 TINY BUBBLES	DON HO
3 UNDER THE BOARDWALK	DRIFTERS
4 BLUE HAWAII	ELVIS PRESLEY
5 I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW	JOHNNY NASH
6 PEARLY SHELLS	TRADITIONAL
7 MARGARITAVILLE	JIMMY BUFFETT
8 I'VE GOT SAND IN MY SHOES	DRIFTERS
9 WIPE OUT	SURFARIS
10 KOKOMO	BEACH BOYS
11 POKAREKARE ANA	TRADITIONAL
12 ROCK-A-HULA BABY	ELVIS PRESLEY
13 DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY	BOBBY MCFERRIN
14 THE TIDE IS HIGH	BLONDIE
15 CATCH A WAVE	BEACH BOYS
16 CAROLINA GIRLS	GENERAL JOHNSON
17 SURF CITY	JAN AND DEAN
18 WONDERFUL WORLD, BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE	JIMMY CLIFF
19 SON OF A SON OF A SAILOR	JIMMY BUFFETT
20 HAWAIIAN WEDDING SONG	ELVIS PRESLEY
21 SURFIN' U.S.A.	BEACH BOYS
22 MYRTLE BEACH DAYS	FANTASTIC SHAKERS
23 TOFA FELENGI	TRADITIONAL
24 OVER THE RAINBOW/WONDERFUL WORLD	ISRAEL KAMAKAWIWO'OLE
25 BEAUTIFUL KAUAI	DON HO
26 FUN, FUN, FUN	BEACH BOYS
27 I LOVE BEACH MUSIC	EMBERS
28 G.T.O.	RONNY & THE DAYTONAS
29 STIR IT UP	JOHNNY NASH
30 HAWAIIAN TATTOO	TRADITIONAL
31 VOLCANO	JIMMY BUFFETT
32 THE LITTLE OLD LADY (FROM PASADENA)	JAN & DEAN
33 ONE LOVE/PEOPLE GET READY	BOB MARLEY
34 SUMMERTIME'S CALLING ME	CATALINA
35 UP ON THE ROOF	DRIFTERS
36 POLYNESIAN LOVE SONG	TRADITIONAL
37 RED RED WINE	UB40
38 SURFER GIRL	BEACH BOYS
39 BUILD ME UP BUTTERCUP	FOUNDATIONS
40 BE YOUNG, BE FOOLISH, BE HAPPY	TAMS



While the party is often held around a swimming pool, there are times when it is a “dry” event and is held indoors with the same decorations and “surf’s up” feel.

It does seem that we mobile DJs often think like club DJs, in that we are only doing our job if people are dancing. If no one is dancing we feel that we must be doing something wrong and we need to take corrective action. Though there are clearly times when that is the case, there are many other times when our job is to play music that sets the mood for the occasion. Two occasions should readily come to mind where we initially play music to set the mood rather than to get people to dance immediately—a wedding reception and Christmas party. At almost every wedding reception we play “mood music” of either lively jazz, American Songbook, or love songs. For an office Christmas party, there are always plenty of traditional holiday tunes played

during the social and dinner hours.

#### This Magic Night

Another type of event, especially during the summertime, where dancing is not the only focus, is a pool party. To make a real musical splash, a pool party should be flavored with a good sampling of Hawaiian music, with some California surf music, reggae and Carolina beach music stirred in the mix as well.

Pool parties are very common during the summer, as people want to beat the heat by having a cool party by the water. Often community gatherings, corporate functions or birthday parties will have a Hawaiian or beach party theme. While the party is often held around a swimming

pool, there are times when it is a “dry” event and is held indoors with the same decorations and “surf’s up” feel. Some dancing may take place during the event, but to make it a memorable occasion play a good portion of summertime music. Hawaiian music, Bob Marley, or the Beach Boys drifting from your speakers will instill a carefree mood that is the essence of any good party.

Recently, at the school my children attend, a teacher appreciation luncheon featured a Hawaiian-style setting. The food, the decorations, and the final touch—the music—all helped create the “island of paradise” aura. In the middle of their workday, the teachers were treated to a rare break from reality. For just over an hour, they could take Bobby McFerrin’s advice heard in his catchy tune, “Don’t Worry, Be Happy.” As the teachers exited to return to the classroom, each of them left with a smile on their face—because they had been briefly transported to the white beaches of Hawaii with its soothing waves crashing rhythmically around their sandaled feet.

#### Island Records

As you can see from this issue’s song list, there is a pretty wide variety of summertime, feel-good beach music to choose from. A Hawaiian CD with great favorites like “Blue Hawaii,” “Kaimana Hila” or “Pearly Shells” should be part of your repertoire for the traditional sounds of our fiftieth state. Other “modern” artists like Don Ho (“Tiny Bubbles” and “Beautiful Kauai”) and Israel Kamakawiwo’ole (“Over the Rainbow/Wonderful World”) have established a distinctive Hawaiian pop sound and deserve our attention at a gig. And don’t forget the King of Rock & Roll; Elvis made his contributions to the genre with his legendary hits, “Rock-a-Hula Baby” and “Hawaiian Wedding Song.” Any groove from the Beach Boys or Jan and Dean will set the California surfs-up mood. For the Carolina shag scene, spin a few from groups like Chairmen of the Boards, the Embers or the Tams. Reggae music, of course, is also associated with the islands, so Bob Marley, Jimmy Cliff and UB40 jams should also be played. Parrotheads, those devoted fans of Jimmy Buffett, will also want their own brand of island escapism, so don’t forget to push play on “Margaritaville,” “Son of a Son of a Sailor” or “Volcano.”

The next time someone asks you what a mobile disc jockey does, perhaps the following explanation would enlighten them. Our ultimate job as a mobile DJ is to create a party where everyone leaves their worries behind and at least for a brief period enjoys life like it should be enjoyed—sharing good times with great friends. We play the music that helps to set the mood for the occasion, as well as music to get people on the dance floor when someone yells, “Play Something We Can Dance To!” **MB**

*Mobile Beat’s resident musicologist since 1992 (in every issue since #11), Jay Maxwell runs the multi-unit, multi-talent entertainment company, Jay Maxwell’s Music by Request, LLC, in Charleston, SC. He is also a professor of Mathematics and Business at Charleston Southern University. His passion for detail and continuous research of clients’ requests can be found not only in this column, but also in his annually updated music guide, Play Something We Can Dance To.*

# Going Green

How environmental responsibility can help your business grow

By Evan Reitmeyer

I'm sure that by now, everyone has noticed the emerging trend of environmentally friendly or "green" products and services. From a full-week special on NBC's *Today Show* in the fall of 2007 to the Super Bowl adopting a carbon-neutral policy, it seems that big business in America is taking the lead on reducing its environmental impact.

After a lot of careful planning and research, my company, MyDeejay.com, launched a plan to become the country's first 100% carbon-neutral wedding DJ service. At first I didn't think it would have a significant impact on our business, but the response over the last few months has been very interesting—so much so that I wanted to share my experiences in hopes that other DJ companies would consider "going green" themselves.

#### Why You Should "Go Green"

The primary reason that all of us should operate our businesses in an environmentally-friendly way is that it's the right thing to do. Each of us has a negative impact on the Earth every day, whether it's by driving a car or using electricity generated by a coal-fired power plant or adding waste to our local landfill. If there is any hope at all of reducing our harmful effect on the planet, it will require that everyone—big businesses, small businesses, and individuals—do their part. But, aside from the ethical reasons, there are quite a few reasons that it makes good business sense for any company, especially a disc jockey service, to operate in an environmentally friendly way.

I can say, without any doubt, that our move to "go green" has improved the public's perception of our company over the last few months. While we've always enjoyed a fantastic reputation in the Baltimore/Washington area, I feel that brides and other wedding vendors now hold an even higher opinion of our company. Wedding planners who very rarely ever recommend any disc jockeys are now calling us for help with environmentally conscious brides. We're getting referrals from venues and vendors who have never referred us before, largely because of the appreciation for our environmental policies.

## BEING GREEN IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK!

Adopting a comprehensive policy of sustainable business practices consists of three major steps

### RENEWABLE ENERGY & CARBON OFF-SETS

Determine whether your electricity provider offers renewable energy options. You may be able to purchase wind or solar power directly from your current utility company.

Purchase Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) to offset the environmental impact of your electricity use (if you are unable to purchase renewable energy directly) and travel emissions.

### RESPONSIBLE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING

Consider operating a "paperless office" by scanning, shredding and recycling all incoming mail and paperwork.

Avoid snail-mailing anything to clients by relying on your website (rather than a bulky informational

packet) to communicate your marketing message, and by emailing contracts and planning forms to clients.

Use a paperless fax service to email you any incoming faxes instead of a standard fax machine.

Recycle waste whenever possible, including paper, plastics, even ink and toner cartridges.

### ECO-FRIENDLY PURCHASING

Use recycled paper whenever possible—we've even found sources for elegant business cards and postcards, as well as regular printer paper for contracts, made from 100% recycled paper.

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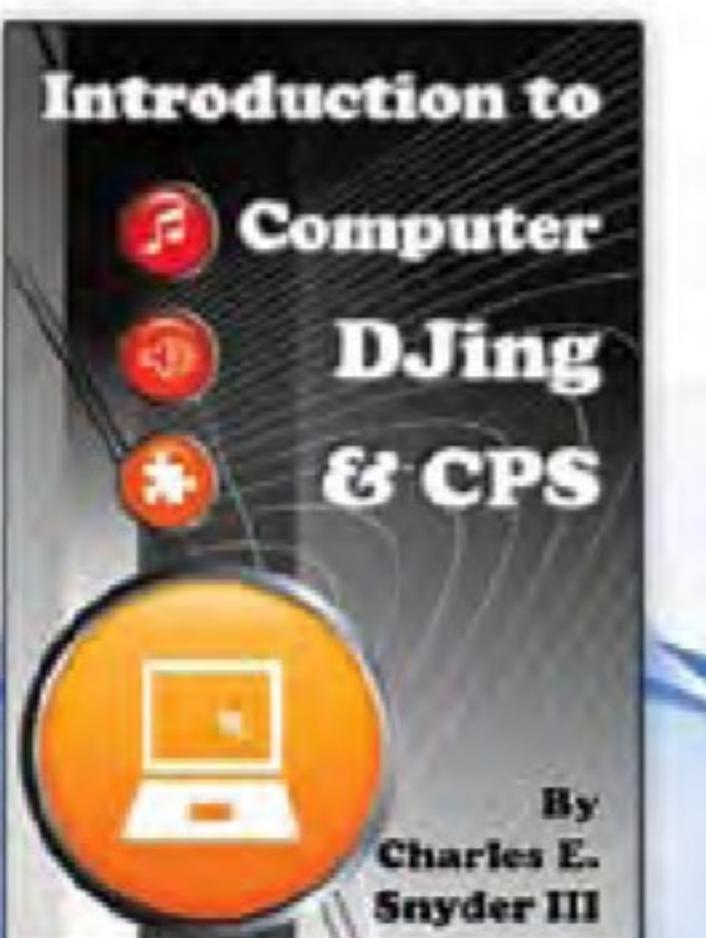
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## SIX REASONS TO GO GREEN

1. Join in taking care of the planet by reducing negative environmental impact
2. Improve public perception of your company and the DJ profession
3. Receive possible positive media exposure
4. Differentiate from live bands by way of smaller environmental "footprint"
5. Gain environmentally conscious clients through referrals
6. Tap growing trend toward environmentally conscious brides and vendors

Our commitment to environmental responsibility has also resulted in something that every DJ wants: more media exposure and a better image in the community. Since we announced our new policies last October, I've been contacted by at least two reporters every month asking me about the trend toward "green" events. I think we can all agree that the general public's opinion of our profession is, to put it lightly, not stellar, and most of us are working to improve it. Operating your business in an ethical way shows that you take your profession seriously, and taking responsibility for your environmental impact will likely translate into the perception that you also take responsibility for your reputation, your service and your clients. The best way to change anyone's bad image of our industry is to do something good to counteract it!

Another advantage to "going green" is that it's yet another opportunity to set yourself apart from live bands, which, in many markets, are serious competition for special event DJs. While virtually every type of business can take steps to becoming more environmentally responsible, the very nature of the work we do makes us a better fit for truly environmentally friendly practices. The fact that it takes just one vehicle to get a DJ to an event, versus several vehicles for a large band, means fewer carbon emissions. Less equipment means less electricity used. For clients who place a high priority on the environment, a DJ is the obvious choice—and by ensuring your business operates in a responsible manner, you'll be that much more attractive.

It should be said that "going green" won't produce an instantaneous flood of prospective clients. The fact is that the growing awareness of environmental issues is only just starting to be reflected in companies' business practices. So far, MyDeejay.com has had a small handful of brides who are planning a "green" wedding and therefore choosing only eco-friendly vendors and products. However, that number is increasing over time, and we've found that the combination of referrals from environmentally conscious brides and vendors, the increased media opportunities, and the knowledge that our business is now operating in a responsible and ethical way is well worth the effort. **MB**

[www.green-e.org](http://www.green-e.org)

Provides a complete list of utility companies offering certified renewable energy, as well as suppliers of certified RECs.

[www.nativeenergy.org](http://www.nativeenergy.org)

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[www.efax.org](http://www.efax.org)

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[www.coopamerica.org](http://www.coopamerica.org)

Co-op America's Green Business Network™ is the oldest, largest, and most diverse network of socially and environmentally responsible businesses in America.

*Evan Reitmeyer is the president of MyDeejay.com, Inc., a wedding entertainment firm based in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. He is also the founding president of the Washington, D.C. area chapter of the American Disc Jockey Association (ADJA-DC) and is a member of the Baltimore Area Disc Jockey Association (BADJA), The International Special Events Society (ISES) and the Washington, D.C. Couture Wedding Consortium. MyDeejay.com has been recognized by Washingtonian Magazine as "Among the Area's Very Best Wedding DJs" since 2006, and is proud to be recognized as a "The Knot Best of Weddings Pick" in 2007.*

wedding industry providers are successfully marketing to their clients.

How much impact could such a movement have if brides and groom embrace the green factor? According to theknot.com, 2.4 million couples get married each year in the United States, generating an estimated revenue basket of \$70 billion. If even a fraction of those 2.4 million couples embrace the emerging green paradigm—supporting open markets for local, organic, recycled and recyclable goods, businesses that engage in sustainable practices, and vendors who share their environmental bent—the impact could be substantial. It could particularly help the mobile entertainment industry, currently reeling from increased competition, easy access to music on the internet and "iPod weddings," by providing a completely positive way to stand out among the muddle of entertainment options.

"I haven't noticed anything yet. But I know it's coming," offered Craig Brown, owner of High Fidelity Entertainment in Vancouver, WA and president of the Southwest Washington & Oregon chapter of the ADJA.

**Catching the Green Wave**

Celebrities are embracing the trend. Stella McCartney's private wedding included sustain-

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## A Nice Day for a... Green Wedding

More and more couples are exchanging conspicuous consumption for sustainable celebrations

By Mike Fischer

**T**he long-held wedding adage, "Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue" may be evolving into a different shade: "Something old, something lean, something recycled, something green." More brides and grooms are expressing their environmental predilection through their choices for their wedding ceremony and reception. Yes, like so many other aspects of life, weddings are going green.

**By the Numbers**

Eco-friendly invitations, organic bridal gowns, recycled wedding bands, organic food and drink, natural make-up and hair, sustainable décor, central locations, outdoor settings, green transportation, and green registries are now not just feel-good buzzwords of the sustainable world, but opportunities

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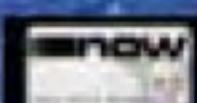
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# AMERICAN DISC JOCKEY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 4 • JULY 2008



## Making the 1% Sale

By Randy Bartlett

### Minor adjustments to help you hit the target more often

**The concept of The 1% Solution is simple: Make a small change in how you do something, to create a different result.** Nowhere in running our businesses is this more important than in the sales process. If you think about it, you'll realize that when you meet with a client, and you don't get the booking, you rarely miss it by a mile. Usually, you were definitely in the running, but for some reason, they went with somebody else. You know that they booked a DJ, so it was wasn't a matter of whether they wanted a DJ service; it was just deciding which one.

### The Price Is Right?

So why didn't you get the booking? The simple, lazy and dangerous answer that we usually go to is price. They booked someone else because that DJ was cheaper. But that's almost never the REAL reason. If it was simply price, then the client would have been forced to book the cheapest DJ in town, and how often does that happen?

No, it's not price. It's usually one of two things, and those are often intertwined. Either they just didn't feel comfortable with you personally or professionally, or they thought they could get a better value elsewhere. Notice that I didn't say a lower price; I said a better VALUE. Which is the better value, a \$400 DJ who destroys their wedding, or an \$800 DJ who makes it a success? And which is the better value, an \$800 DJ

who makes it a success, or a \$1500 DJ who makes it the best wedding their guests have ever seen?

### Value Makeover

So for the client, they have to make a decision about where they spend their limited budget, and where they can get the best value. If two DJs appear to be equal in ability and service, and one is cheaper, then isn't the wise decision for the client to go with the cheaper DJ? Wouldn't you?

That's where The 1% Solution comes in. Since it's not usually a slam dunk decision when they book someone else, then maybe it was just one or two very little things that could have made a difference. For years, I met with all of clients dressed extremely casually. In fact, because the summers are so hot here, I often wore shorts and a polo shirt. I justified it by telling myself that they were dressed the same way, and that "no one had ever complained." (The kiss of death in business.)

A couple of years ago, I thought that I had finally found my personal ceiling on what I could charge for my service. My booking rate was down substantially, and I was getting killed by other DJs at a lower price. I was ready to lower my rates to be more competitive, but before I did, I decided to try a few things first.

I started dressing better, often wearing a shirt and tie. I cleaned up our conference room, and painted our office. And I saw an immediate change in bookings. So much so that I have since raised my rates over \$500 since then, and my booking ratio is higher than ever.



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What can you do to improve your ratio? First and foremost, understand that clients don't book someone else because of price; they book someone else because of perceived value. No one really wants to hire a great DJ—they want to have a great reception. But most of them realize that in order to have a great reception, they need a great DJ.

### Extraordinary Selling

How do you sell? It's very easy in this business to sell from a negative point of view. "If you don't book me, then your party will be a nightmare." Too many DJs sell against the nightmare, but if you're a top entertainer in your market, you're probably not usually competing with the bottom. You're more likely competing against the middle, so let the middle guys sell against the bottom, and you only need to compete against the middle, which makes it easier to create a higher

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

## ASSOCIATION NEWS

### Central Kansas Chapter Makes Things Presidential

The White House recently tasked local members of the American Disc Jockey Association to help during Greensburg (KS) High School's commencement ceremony May 4, 2008. President Bush was the keynote speaker and took time from his busy schedule to stay for the entire ceremony and deliver diplomas to the graduates. He was on hand to honor the city one year after a massive, two-mile-wide tornado with the highest rating on the damage scale (EF5) destroyed approximately 95% of the city and killed 11 people. Since then, the citizens have been working to rebuild their city.

Members of the Central Kansas chapter of the ADJA worked for weeks in Greensburg cleaning up after last year's tragedy, even producing last year's high school graduation. This year, the chapter was asked to produce the Presidential event.

"I got a phone call from Greensburg saying they needed our help," said Cain Humphrey, vice-president of the chapter. "We didn't know how much they needed our help until last week, but we got it all done and it was a huge success."

Many of the mobile disc jockeys spent over 100 consecutive hours coordinating businesses from



### ...1% Sale

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43

perceived value.

Instead of telling the client to be wary of fly-by-night, unprofessional, ill-equipped DJs, tell them how you can make their wedding special. Really special. Give them ideas. Don't be afraid to give away some creative ideas. A lot of DJs are afraid that if they give out a creative idea, the client will just take it to a cheaper DJ. Sure, that can happen, but it won't if you set it up right. Find a couple of great ideas which dazzle your client. Something special just for them, like a neat bouquet presentation, or a special introduction, or custom recording, love story, group dance which incorporates their sorority or work group, or anything else that's meaningful to them. After you find an idea that they love, tell them, "That idea was free. That's just one little moment in the reception. When we sit down to plan out your entire reception, from beginning to end, there will be several opportunities to create magic at your reception, and because you've hired me, you'll have all of my creativity at your disposal. Together, we'll make sure that your reception is unlike anybody else's. I can't wait, because after spending this time with you, I have some great ideas of some things we can do to make your reception incredible. I hope we get the chance to work together, because I know your reception has the potential to awesome!"

Now they have a reason to hire you, and when they go visit another DJ, just tell them to ask him for some creative ideas. When they see how his ideas stack up against yours, they'll know they'd be crazy to go anywhere else.

Next issue, we'll discuss how to "set up" the other DJ, so that even if he gives them a good idea, they'll still come running back to you! **A**

Texas, Oklahoma, Tennessee and other locations to deliver audio and video to guests outside and inside the Greensburg high school gym. Many of the items didn't arrive until the day before the President's arrival.

"The White House gave us the green light on Thursday evening," chapter board member Jeffrey Steinert said. "So we had two days to deliver a Presidential-quality event."

And deliver they did. From the little items like cups, chairs, fencing and tents, to big items like the jumbo outdoor LCD screen, outdoor audio, bleachers, presidential velvet pipe and drape, catering, and a dual video projection installation, the team of mobile disc jockeys put it all together in record time.

Ron Brown, president of the Central Kansas Chapter, says his goal was to help create a lifelong memory for the community, which had been through so much this past year.

"Our members work hard every weekend making sure life's memorable events are successful," Brown said. "This event was memorable for us, too. Not only because of the special guest, but because of those 18 graduates who have been through so much this year."

### ADJA Chapter Tour

At the recent ADJA National Meeting, held in Las Vegas this past February, ADJA President and Executive Director DJ Dr. Drax announced his intentions to personally tour and visit as many local chapters as possible during the calendar year of 2008. In keeping with this promise, the National Office has begun the process to bring this dream to fruition and has even upped the ante considerably by bringing along such nationally recognized industry leaders as Randy Bartlett, Jim Cerone, Scott Faver and Larry Williams.

With nearly a dozen visits already made and more than two dozen additional stops slated by years end, the ADJA Chapter Tour is in full swing. This tag team effort by Dr. Drax and various industry leaders is offering a one-two punch of information guaranteed to boost the efforts of DJs nationwide. Chapter members are encouraged to inquire with local leadership regarding dates, times

and information on these tour stops.

In addition to visiting local chapters, the ADJA is continuing its efforts to remain at the forefront as a major sponsor of many of the nation's most popular regional and national DJ events. This latest ADJA

Chapter Tour is yet another example of the ADJA's solid commitment to offering superior educational content to its members and to reach out to all DJs nationwide to unite under the progressive efforts of the nation's premier national DJ organization.



Atlanta Chapter tour stop



Charlotte Chapter tour stop

CONTINUED ON PAGE 50

# Creative Ways to Find New Clients

By Mark Imperial

## I'm often asked, "Where is THE best place for a mobile DJ to get lots of new business?"

My answer? There is no ONE place to get more business. Rather, there are hundreds of places to utilize in order to obtain more prospects...and you must go to as many as possible!

When you are marketing in any industry, especially the mobile DJ industry, you have to cast a wide net in order to get as many prospects as possible to respond to your marketing messages. Once captured, you must then move them along the sales process to convert them into paying clients.



### Take the Freeway to Prospects

Don't get me wrong, casting a wide net does NOT mean you have to spend a lot of money. There are plenty of FREE methods for lead generation. Here is a short list that comes to mind as I write this: 1) write articles for publication; 2) write articles for trade journals; 3) get published in affiliate newsletters, ie. from your accountant, real estate agent, and/or insurance agent. These just a few of the many, many opportunities where you can do something without cost to gain exposure.

### Find the Hidden Opportunities

There are numerous ways to leverage your mobile DJ abilities. First, gather a list of your top 100 "dream clients." Next, do your homework. See if these folks are already spending money on solutions similar to what you can provide. Finally, tailor unique offers for their specific needs. Sending a plain, one-size-fits-all message to diverse markets is foolish.

For example, if you are approaching a dream corporation with a new idea, you'd rather be the person who put a "new twist on a proven thing" than the one presenting a new untested method. It is much easier to demonstrate how you perfected something already proven than it is to convince someone to be the guinea pig for something completely new and uncertain.

### Soft Economy Offers Solid Possibilities

Things may appear to be getting tougher for the mobile DJ today. I say "Phooey"! Today's market presents the biggest opportunity for the mobile DJ in years!

With many DJs abandoning ship and pulling the plug on their ads and marketing efforts, there is less clutter, and, given time, there will be fewer DJs left to share in the spoils! YOU must NOT contribute to the "doom and gloom" mentality other DJs are exhibiting. Instead you must ask yourself, "Where is the profit in this?" Furthermore, share positive outlooks with your clients and prospects. They don't need to be reminded of gas prices and economic woes. In other words, contribute to the solution and not the problem. **A**

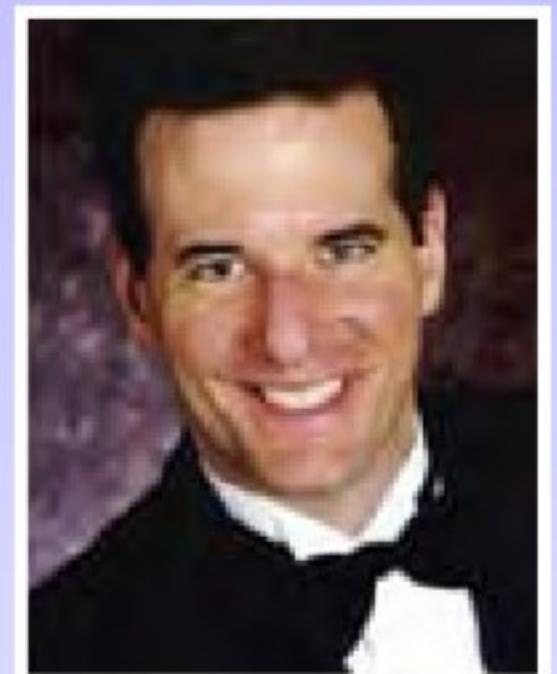
Mark Imperial is a leading authority on marketing, sales presentation, and performance for the mobile DJ industry. From Chicago, he is a popular entertainer for some of the world's most famous brands. He is also the author and creator of *The DJ's Edge Marketing System: The Most Powerful Strategies Ever Created for DJ Entertainers*. For more information and a free Marketing Course Download, visit [www.DJsEdge.com/ADJA](http://www.DJsEdge.com/ADJA).

# Why You Need "Plan B"

By Jim Cerone

## Recently, I got an extended lesson in why one must have a "Plan B" for every aspect of DJ life.

My car died on the way to my event. There I was, driving along, listening to Norah Jones, when the song stopped. I glanced over and the car CD player had shut off. About this time I had to stop for a red light. When the light turned green, I pressed the accelerator. Lurch, cough, dead.



Totally dead (not even the flashers worked) in the travel lane of a busy four-lane state highway, with cars whizzing by at 55mph. My first call was to my wife, who happened to be nearby. She said she'd pile our boys in the car and be there as soon as she could.

Then, I started calling the towing companies I keep stored in my phone (I have five. Good thing, too.) The first one told me they were backed up at least two hours. The second never answered. The third said he wasn't too far away and could be there in 20 minutes.

In the meantime, my car was a sitting duck and a serious traffic hazard. My next call was to 911. They said to open the hatch and set out flares if I had any or orange triangles. (Need to get me some of those.) Thankfully, a very nice police officer showed up soon after, and directed traffic around me.

Then, my wife arrived and we piled all my gear in her car. She and the boys stayed with my car till the tow got there, while I headed on to my gig. Luckily, I was practicing what I preach--I had left the house 2 1/2 hours early, so even with the breakdown, I got there in plenty of time.

The location is called The Scottish Rite Cathedral, and it's a beautiful old building constructed by the Masons. I've played there many times. But while I was sound-checking, I noticed a radio station bleeding through my speakers.

Luckily, I carry extra "ferrite chokes" for just such an occasion. Popped 2 of those puppies over the XLR cables leading to my speakers and viola! No more bleed through.

While changing, I realized I had forgotten the white t-shirt I usually pack with my tux. Luckily, I always keep a spare in my garment bag. Changed, dressed and ready for guests 30 minutes early. Whew.

For this wedding, they were having a friend do the introductions instead of me. No problem: I prepared my script the same way I usually do (16 point font, double-spaced, names spelled phonetically), just in case he needed one. Not only that, but I prepared the script two ways: one with all the children first (just in case they were moody), and one with the children between the maid/best man and b/g. The flowergirls and ringbearers WERE cranky, and the bride said to intro them first, so I pulled that version for him.

As it turned out, the friend did NOT have a script--he was going to read from the ceremony program, which was written in tiny, fancy font, with lines drawn every which way to track who was walking with who. He was very happy to use the script I had prepared and he did a great job.

Prepare for everything and you'll be ready for anything. That's why you need "Plan B." **A**

# Born Standing Up: Entertaining Lessons from a Master

By Mike Walter

**Rather than my normal style of article, this is basically a book report. I had received numerous recommendations to read Steve Martin's book, *Born Standing Up*, so I finally picked up a copy and breezed through it.** It's a very quick and enjoyable read. And though what we as mobile DJs do is much different than what stand-up comics do, I believe there are enough similarities to make this book not only a fun read but a pertinent one for all of us as well.

Martin's book focuses on his stand-up career. He talks a bit about his family life and briefly about his early acting, but for the most part you'll discover how he forged a career for himself in stand-up comedy. He went from playing some of the smallest folk music clubs in California in the 1960s (before there even were "comedy clubs") to becoming the most popular touring comic ever, by the late 1970s. He actually went beyond stand-up fame to achieve almost rock star status. His albums won Grammies and sold in the millions. His single

"King Tut" reached #17 on the pop charts in the middle of the disco craze of 1978. Plus he established a number of catch phrases that became ubiquitous in the late '70s like "Excuuuuuse Me!" and "I'm a Wild and Crazy Guy!"



## Insights for Entertainers

What I found most fascinating about *Born Standing Up* is the advice that Martin imparts throughout the book. I highlighted numerous sections and came away with some great nuggets regarding not just comedy but entertaining in general.

For example, early on in the book Martin talks about how he performed in some not-so-ideal locations. He writes that "comedy's enemy is distraction." He then goes on to explain that, though he worried constantly about everything from the lighting to hecklers, "these worries keep the mind sharp and the senses active." I thought about that as it applies to the mobile DJ industry. We all have our ideal room that we'd like to play in and our ideal crowd that we'd like to play for. But we also know that we rarely get these situations. When there are distractions, it's our job to work around them. Or better yet, work with them. Why not incorporate that big pillar in the middle of the dance floor into the show instead of just ignoring it? Or that drunken guy who keeps yelling for "Freebird."

Later, Martin mentions a revelation he had at one point regarding "originality." Up to that point his stage act had been a combination of magic and comedy, but many of the bits had been "borrowed" from other performers. "I would have to write everything in the act myself," he decided. "There could be nothing that made the audience feel they weren't seeing something utterly new." That section made me pause and think about the mobile DJ business. It is so difficult in our industry to be completely unique. So many clients and guests want the same old music that's been played a million times and cake cutting or the bouquet toss that's been performed forever. Yet as mobile DJs, if we take the approach that Steve Martin took and just say, "There can be nothing that makes the audience feel they aren't seeing something utterly new," it'll force us to think outside the box and create a unique show. And hopefully one that clients will book with little or no regard to the cost.

In another section of the book Martin shares a nugget of advice that an older entertainer had given him regarding what to wear on stage. "Always look better than they do" he was told. Now if you remember Martin's act, he took this advice to heart. At the height of his fame, his stand-up attire was a three-piece, all-white suit, which only added to his goofiness. It's one thing to see a guy with bunny ears or a plastic arrow through his head, but it's even funnier when that guy is dressed to the nines. Yet that simple advice works for us as mobile DJs as well. Always look better than they do. My philosophy at events is to always dress one notch above the guests. If it's a causal beach party and everyone is in shorts, I'll wear long linen pants and a button-up Hawaiian shirt. If it's a reunion and everyone is in corporate casual I'll be in a suit. And at most of my weddings, where the majority of the guys are in suits, then I go with a tuxedo. Always looking better than they do.

## A Smooth Consistency

My favorite section of *Born Standing Up* came towards the end of the book. Martin is recapping his years on the stand-up stage and he writes: "It was easy to be great. Every entertainer has a night when everything is clicking. These nights are accidental and statistical: Like lucky cards in poker, you can count on them occurring over time. What was hard was to be good, consistently good, night after night, no matter what the abominable circumstances."

I closed the book at that point and nodded my head. What a fantastic point that is for any entertainer.

As mobile DJs we should never judge ourselves by our best parties. There are some crowds that are just insane. They will dance

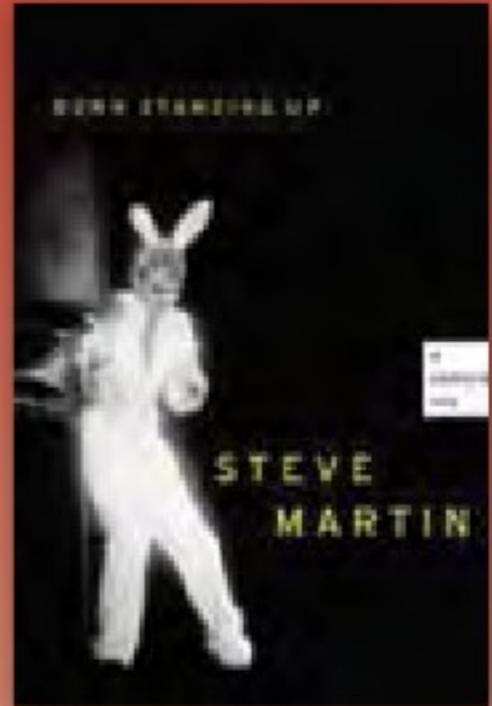
to anything and everything. And the odds are, if you DJ at enough events, you will have the pleasure of spinning for crowds like this from time to time. Good for you. Have fun. Just don't think you've become some invincible DJ god.

The real test is whether or not you can be good at every event. When the crowd is great and when the crowd is dead. On a Saturday night and on a Sunday afternoon. When everything goes perfectly and when they get a snow storm and only half of their guests show up. Can you be consistently good at every single party? That indeed is the sign of a true professional.

As you can tell, I highly recommend *Born Standing Up*, especially if you are old enough, like myself, to remember the late '70s and how huge Steve Martin was for a few years. I've spotlighted just a few of the many nuggets you'll read; the book is full of fantastic advice from an entertainer who has done it all.

Reading the book made me remember the Steve Martin albums that I owned back in the day. I was able to find both *Let's Get Small* and *Wild and Crazy Guy* on CD and they brought back many laughs for me as well. One of the funnier moments, and one that made me think of how lucky I am to be doing what I do for a living, is a song he sings about people getting up early in the morning and going to work or to college. He finishes the song with: "But the most amazing thing to me is, I get paid for doing this."

I hope you feel the same about your career.



# Adding the "Third Dimension"

By Scott Faver - The Game Master

**Video projection is the "third dimension" you need, to offer a complete package of entertainment. With the advent of reasonably priced projectors and easy to use digital DJ software that plays MP3s, videos, karaoke and slide shows, now is the time to add visuals to your show.**

There are plenty of hardware/software options. As the Game Master, I'll focus on the entertainment aspects and let the gearheads tell you what they think works best. But, because I know you will ask...I've been completely digital for over five years, with a rack-mounted machine, specifically designed to play music and show video. My software of choice is Tricerasoft and my music video provider is Promo Only.

My approach to adding visuals is a little different than most. Instead of setting up the screen just to show the typical video/photo montage, and then taking it down, I like to have it up all the time, and treat the audience to visuals throughout the celebration. These might include: a photo montage on the big screen with pictures of the bride and groom's engagement photos; pictures of the parents and wedding party as they are introduced—adding even more meaning to a personalized introduction; and pictures of the ceremony while guests enjoy dinner. And that's just the beginning.

## Finessing the Photos

All of this is easier to accomplish now than ever before, with more and more photographers shooting with digital cameras—and everyone with a camera phone and/or digital camera. Start with the professionals and then go from there. Before the wedding, contact the photographer, see if he/she is shooting with a digital camera.

Next (and this is VERY important), explain that you respect and honor their artistic property and do NOT want to steal their pictures, but instead would like to share their talent with the audience. With the photographer's permission you would like to download pictures from their camera to your computer, show them on the big screen and then DELETE them when the wedding day is done. Guests who comment on the pictures or request a copy/print will receive the photographer's business card.

Start here. If your rapport develops (no pun intended) then you may request to use some of the pictures from the wedding on your web site and offer a link to his site.

I like to get 2-3 downloads from the photographer throughout the night, so I have ceremony pictures, introduction/dinner pictures and then some dance pictures. Guests get a big kick out of seeing themselves on the big screen.

If you cannot get the photographer's permission, you are still not out of the game. Bring your own digital camera, takes some pictures and then put them up on the screen for everyone to see.

## Wedding Reception Visualizations

*Father-Daughter Dance.* In addition to sharing the father and daughter's story, similar to a love story, but designed for the father and daughter, I'll have pictures of daddy and daughter together; possibly even video of when the bride was younger, or something shot in advance specifically for this moment. A message from daddy to daughter, vice versa, or both. All as a backdrop to their dance. It's all very touching.

*Mother-Son Moment.* Many times the groom does not want to

dance with Mom. This can be a great alternative. Invite her to sit in a chair on the dance floor, center stage, and ask the groom to stand next to her, or just behind her. Then roll the pictures, play some appropriate music to set the tone, and then tell their story. No dancing required.

I have a set of standard questions for this mother-son moment that work well for the father-daughter dance as too. I'm happy to share them free of charge; just sent your request to [Scott@ThePartyFavers.com](mailto:Scott@ThePartyFavers.com), Password: FDMS.

Dynamic and distinctive dedications make memorable moments. Welcome to the wonderful world of YouTube®. Everyone is doing it. So why not add it to your events. Invite guests to send you their pictures or videos or to record a message for the bride and groom and then (using your discretion) play it for the guests during dinner for everyone to see. This works particularly well for guests who live out of state/country and/or whom cannot attend but would like to say something (publicly) to the bride & groom. Look here for more details: <http://thepartyfavers.com/weddings/dedications.html>. Guests at the event are also welcome to make visual dedications which will scroll banner style across the screen.

## Mitzvah Moments, Corporate Proposals

*Candle Lighting.* For Bar/Bat Mitzvahs you can enhance the candle lighting ceremony with visuals by showing one or more pictures of the candle recipients. This is especially powerful for the memory candle when you show pictures of grandparents who have passed away.

At a recent Bar Mitzvah a grandmother could not attend, since she lived in Israel at the time. When the young man recited his poem and lit the candle in his grandmother's absence we surprised him by playing a recorded message from his grandmother. Her message was in Hebrew. So we scrolled the translation in English across the screen as she spoke, for everyone to read. It brought the house down!

There are plenty of visual options for corporate events as well, from personalized photos of the CEO when he speaks, funny pictures taken at their recent picnic, photos of award recipients, the visual aspects of game shows like Jeopardy and so on.

And of course MTV Video to Go. In addition to playing the latest and greatest audio tracks, you can also play the music video. (Promo Only has some great censored edits of some of the more risqué videos, which is a real plus.)

These are just a few of the many ways you can add video projection—the Third Dimension—to your package of entertainment.

For more party ideas visit: <http://thepartyfavers.com/mallistform.html>. 

**The talent for being happy is appreciating and liking what you have, instead of what you don't have.**

Woody Allen, Academy Award-winning actor and director

THE  
MASTER'S  
SERIES



# If You Really Cared...

By Peter Merry

## I had a conversation with a DJ a while back about securing my services for a speaking engagement at his local DJ organization's gathering.

The event was set for a Sunday and would require air travel on my part. After discussing the travel and lodging costs that would be involved, we also discussed my speaker's fee. Suddenly, the tenor of our discussion changed as the DJ said, "If you really cared about helping other DJs with your seminars, you wouldn't charge a speaker's fee."

### Following the Logic

I was stunned. Up until that comment, I had assumed I was speaking with an intelligent business person. But then I also found myself wondering if such a statement could actually be true? Had my ego gotten the best of me? Had my desire to be compensated for my time, my services, and my expertise overshadowed my ability to help other DJs become more successful? Was it possible that my true motivations were only for my own financial interests? I found myself compelled to explore this theory in greater detail.

*Premise 1: If you really care about helping others, you will not charge for your time, your services, or your expertise.*

*Premise 2: If you charge for your time, your services, or your expertise, then your primary concerns are for earning money.*

*Conclusion: Then only those who refuse to charge for their time, their services, or their expertise truly care about the people they are serving.*

On first blush, the line of reasoning sounds true. After all, Mother Theresa gave her life in service to others because she cared about the less fortunate who desperately needed assistance. It is doubtful that she ever demanded a speaker's fee. But if she ever did, perhaps she requested that it be made as a charitable donation to her organization.

A portrait photograph of Peter Merry, a man with short brown hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, and a patterned pink and blue tie. He is smiling at the camera. To the right of the portrait, there is a block of text.  
But how about some more realistic examples of people who get paid for helping others? Doctors, nurses, police officers, firefighters, and military personnel often choose their professions because they care about helping others who may be in need. But do they really care? Or are they just motivated by their paychecks? Would it be fair to apply the Premises and conclusion presented above as just cause for questioning their true motivations for pursuing their chosen profession?

Maybe they truly cared about helping others when they set out to become a doctor, a nurse, a police officer, a firefighter, or a member of our military...but once those paychecks started rolling in, their primary concerns shifted to earning money. After all, if they truly cared about helping others, wouldn't they just do it for free?

### Clarification, from the Good Book

Either you care about others...or you are concerned with earning money. This line of reasoning breaks down the moment it declares that only one of the two given options can be true.

Based on the cited examples, it is entirely possible to be motivated by caring for others and be concerned with earning money at the same time. After all, if a firefighter only cared about helping others and thus refused to take a paycheck, then his or her family would likely suffer as a result. This would create a situation where the firefighter cared more about helping others than he or she would care about supporting their own family.

When one continually chooses to sacrifice their family's needs over their concern for the needs of others, they risk losing their own family as a result. (By the way, Mother Theresa was a nun. She had no family to support.) In I Timothy 5:4, the Apostle Paul states the following:

*"If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."*

So clearly, even according to the Bible, helping others is good, but it is ALSO imperative that one provide for his or her own family as well.

So how do we strike a healthy balance? Further into the same passage quoted above, the Paul confronts this very topic in regards to preachers and teachers in the church and whether or not they should be paid for their time, their services, or their expertise. His response in I Timothy 5:18b is to say, simply:

*"The worker deserves his wages."*

### Positive Outlook

It's high time we start focusing on the results that we want for our industry, instead of making negative assumptions about the motives of those who are trying to help our industry get there. Determining who cares and who does not solely on whether or not they are getting paid for their time, their services, or their expertise is not only wrongheaded, but is also detrimental to our overall success as an industry. After all...don't you care about the clients you serve...and aren't you getting paid to serve them?

Maybe it's time to consider changing the premises to arrive at a much more healthy and logical conclusion:

*Premise 1: If you really care about helping others (whether they are wedding clients or fellow wedding DJs), you should charge for your time, your services, or your expertise.*

*Premise 2: If you charge for your time, your services, or your expertise, then you will take pride in your work and strive to deliver a high quality of service.*

*Conclusion: Then it follows that those who charge for their time, their services, or their expertise truly care about the people they are serving. *

# Rule Your Habits—Don't Let Them Rule You

By Bryan Dodge

**Let me say to start off, that I'm not some Puritan who thinks you shouldn't enjoy yourself over a beer or cigar. That's really, really not the point of what I'm saying in this article.**

I want you to define your habits yourself. From my point of view, the habits that control you—the ones you can't easily get away from—are the bad ones. I could tell you a dozen stories about drug and alcohol addiction, but I believe you already know that these habits will destroy you and everything and everyone around you. It's the subtle habits that can sneak up on you.

## Workaholics Anonymous

When I got my company up and running at full speed, we decided we wanted to fulfill a long-time dream and move to a house on a lake. We found the perfect spot in Lucas, Texas. I could hook my boat up to the truck and be on the water five minutes after leaving my driveway. But for the first six years we lived in Lucas, I don't think I got to the lake more than six times total. My office was on a direct line between the airport and the house, and I'd make it habit to stop and check just one more thing at the office when I came home from a trip.

That "one more thing" usually became two or three more things, and I routinely rolled in at seven or eight at night. Working too hard—or too inefficiently—is definitely a bad habit. I finally got the message from my wife, who asked me one night why we even bothered to move to the lake since we never saw it. After having this heart to heart discussion with my wife, I moved my office so that it was in the complete opposite direction of the airport. We saved up some money and bought a new ski boat, and I committed myself to be home in the afternoons when my kids got back from school so we could go skiing. Now, in the summer, we're on the lake three to four days a week.

**By taking care not to let your habits control you, you will do a better job of keeping your life in balance and in proportion.**

To assess your own habits, you've got to be honest with yourself. You might have something you've been doing in your day-to-day life that was "okay" for a long time because you were younger, stronger, or more focused. How you eat is a great example. Your metabolism changes as you get older, and just because you consider yourself a healthy eater—for a 35-year-old—doesn't mean you're going to be a healthy 50-year-old. If you don't monitor your habits, those sandwiches you eat for lunch when you're 30 and fit could turn you into a chubby middle-aged person.

By taking care not to let your habits control you, you will do a better job of keeping your life in balance and in proportion. It's not about

eliminating all the things you enjoy from your life and following some grim no-fun plan. I like wasting time as much as anybody. I've just figured out a mix of habits that works for me.

## All Things...in Moderation

Let me use alcohol as an example. I've got some serious alcoholism in my family, and I know that "drowning my tears in my beer" is something that would get me into trouble pretty fast. But I don't believe that making a rule that I won't ever go to Germany and enjoy a beer at Oktoberfest, or taste a fantastic wine from a friend's cellar is the solution. I could be a regular drinker and get to the point where I was going to have to take the drastic step of cutting all alcohol from my life—like some of my friends have had to do. Or, I could be honest with myself about my limitations, and set a system in place that would allow me to enjoy myself in moderation. I decided to eliminate hard liquor from my life and restricted my drinking to "non-school" nights—Friday and Saturday. You know sometimes the greatest control of a habit is understanding that you might lose the opportunity to enjoy something if you don't manage it.

The key to the Good Life is to stay in control of your habits so they don't control you—and force you to do something drastic later. People develop diabetes in their middle-age years partially because they couldn't control their intake of food. Would you rather eat an extra slice of pie now or stop eating it forever when you're 55? To me, it's an easy choice.



## American Excess Story

But the truth is that the opportunities that make it so easy for us to live in America also make it easy to keep a hold on whatever habits we have. No society in the history of the world has had as much access to food as we do right now. Grocery stores are bursting with every kind of food you can imagine—and some our parents even couldn't imagine, thanks to food science. And while it's great that frozen food can remain edible for months and your kids can enjoy green ketchup if that's what they really want, millions of people in this country are obese because their idea of a meal is something you pick up at a fast food restaurant.

The second part of that equation is the fact that we just don't need to expend as much energy to live as we used to. We spend the majority of our lives in cars, planes and elevators. A lot of people aren't even doing something as simple as walking behind a lawn mower anymore.

This might explain what's happening to many people today, but I don't think these are valid excuses. Not legitimate ones, anyway. As I said, The Good Life is about gaining control over your life, and habits are one area you can focus on. Do you want to change those habits? Do you wish you could quit habits that waste your time, hurt your health, or otherwise get in the way of The Good Life?

## The Good Life Rules!



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Glendale, AZ 85308  
By Phone: 888-723-5776  
By Email: [office@adja.org](mailto:office@adja.org)  
By Click: [www.ADJA.org](http://www.ADJA.org)

### ADJA Chapter Tour

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43

"We have been thrilled with the response to our educational touring" states Dr. Drax.

*"My name is Jeff Bradley and I have been a professional mobile disc jockey in the New England area for over 30 years (established in 1977). During that time, I have seen many changes in our industry, but nothing like what has happened in the last four years! I have attended DJ conventions in Las Vegas, Atlantic City, etc. and have been noticing some of the great things the ADJA has done to help this industry. I really enjoyed the meeting in Brockton, Mass. on Tues Night! I think Dr. Drax hit on some of the most important and difficult obstacles that we face as mobile DJs."*

"Comments such as these are really encouraging us that we are on target," says Drax.

The tour adds an in-person, local component to the already extensive educational efforts of the ADJA, which include providing seminar content to most of the major trade shows, and exclusive

webinar programs that bring top content right into members' homes. By the end of the year the ADJA will have produced several one-day regional conferences. So far, the attendance has been almost 100 DJs per conference.



SE VA Chapter tour stop

"For a regional event we think that this is fantastic!" says Drax. "Our local leaders have really stepped up to assist with

this effort. All across the country they are stepping up the efforts in their local markets. Here are just some of the standouts so far: Robbie Britton, and the leadership of the Atlanta, Boston, SE VA, East TN, Dallas and Houston chapters have been incredible. They personify our vision statement: "If We Work Together, Imagine What We Could Do!" A

make their logo so large you can reach no other conclusion. But what would a Microsoft store look like? A Microsoft version of the iPod? A Microsoft phone?

Why are these questions so hard to answer, when the same questions about Apple are so easy? Because Apple understands brand identity. Apple knows that, as the word suggests, an identity is something identifiable, and also identical every time; otherwise, it would not be an identity at all, but a collection of different masks, obscuring the company behind them.

There are colors that belong to Apple—and thousands that do not. Surfaces that belong to Apple (brushed silver) and dozens that do not. Sentiments that belong to Apple ("insanely great") and those that do not ("a commitment to excellence").

You even know what to expect from Apple's instructions. They will appear to have been written by Hemingway: not one word more than necessary, just one true and painstakingly edited sentence after another.

Apple is managing its brand brilliantly. Every element sings in unison, a song without a weak note. The brands you trust most do that. They are predictably good at least and great at best, and their utter consistency reassures you, leaving you with the thought: "I want what they have."

And in growing numbers, people want what Apple has. Out in the economic gloom you can see Macintoshes and iPhones flying, and Apple's obsessive management of its brand deserves significant credit. A

## Lessons from Flying Apples

By Harry Beckwith

**Item: April 23, 2008 - Defying the economic tides, Apple® today announced a \$1.05 billion profit** for the second quarter and a 45% increase in revenue over the same quarter a year ago, fueled partly by a 51% increase in unit sales of Macintosh computers.

We live in a world where technological improvements can be mimicked by a competitor in weeks, not the years it once required. In services, the final competitors for an account appear so similar on the surface that a prospect must dig beneath that to make a decision.

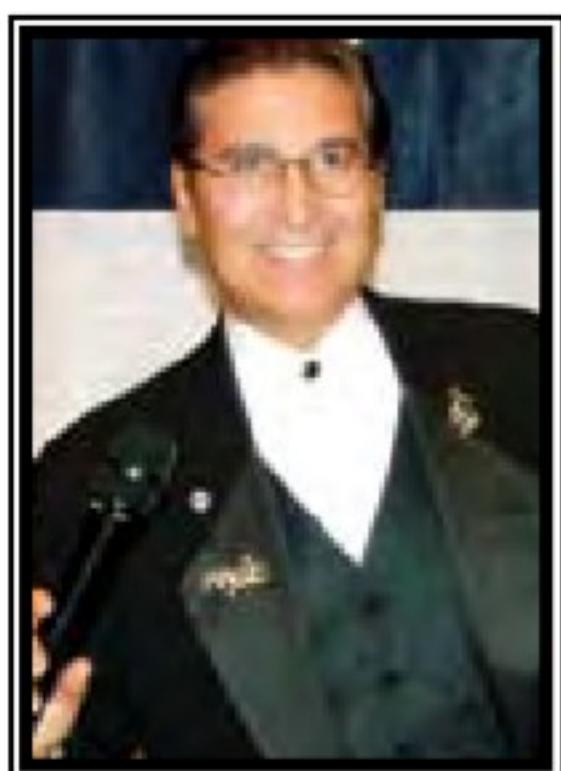
How do people choose?

They chose the brand, as Apple is demonstrating vividly.

You know "Apple" the minute you encounter it: its groundbreaking stores, its ads, its point of purchase, its packaging, its website. You hear iPhone®, iMac®, iTunes®. You know them not just on sight, but even before, in your mind's eye. You can picture them: simple, engaging, clean and wonderful to look at, easy to read—and use. Indeed, that expectation becomes a prophecy; an i-anything becomes what you believe it will be.

You sometimes know you are experiencing "Microsoft®," if they





# Not Just Another Gig

When it becomes just a routine, it's time to shake things up!

By Paul Kida, The DJ Coach

**“Got another gig tonight!” How many times have we all said that? More importantly, how many times have we gone to a job with just that attitude, which is expressed by, “Yeah, it’s just another gig, no big deal. I’ve done this hundreds of times,” or similar sentiments. Is this truly the attitude of a professional, or the attitude of someone trying to raise the bar in the DJ industry? Let’s examine why every job we do is not “just another gig” and why we might possibly need a little attitude adjustment.**

#### Blasé DJ?

First of all, let's look at the view some might have that says, "Hey, I do this all the time, for years in fact. A gig is a gig, with few variations, so it really is no big deal." While it is true that we should have confidence in our own job performance, is it also true that we should feel that there is minimal preparation needed for what we consider a "normal event"--something we have done every weekend, maybe even for years? There is a major flaw in the attitude that adopts this kind of perspective.

The problem is that if we feel this way, we have lost our respect for both our client AND ourselves. Our clients deserve the very best performance every time. That does not include being nonchalant or indifferent about our preparation for any job that we do. Respecting our clients means that we care about them and their individuality, and every aspect of our relationships with them. Respecting ourselves means that we care about our business reputation and how we come across to each client, as well as all of the other



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# Respecting our clients means... that we spend the time to properly, thoroughly preparing for each and every gig we do, whether it is a simple two-hour middle school dance, a 50th anniversary party or an elegant six-hour wedding reception.

vendors that are involved in any event. It means that we spend the necessary time to properly, thoroughly prepare for each and every gig we do, whether it is a simple two-hour middle school dance, a 50th anniversary party or an elegant six-hour wedding reception.

Let's look at the example of what we might consider a run-of-the-mill middle school dance. How hard is this to do? A hundred or so 6th through 8th graders just wanting to hear their favorite current tunes and do a little dancing shouldn't be much work. All we need is to make sure we are up to date with the Top 40, Hip Hop and a few Alternative songs and we are ready to go. Would you say that is showing respect and care for our client?

A little fine-tuning in attitude can make a real difference in how we are perceived—in how people judge our degree of professionalism. Thus, it can make all the difference in the world about whether we are called the next time they have a dance! Sure we could just show up, play some tunes, collect our check and go on to the next, but wouldn't it show more respect on our part if we did just a little bit more and showed that we really cared about the kids? Just a couple of things that you could do are: 1) Send a request list to the school ahead of time, so you know exactly what to expect when it comes to song requests; and 2) come up with some games and interactive events to work in during the dancing (Just a note: I've found that when you include some of the parents or teachers, it steps up the excitement level in the kids, especially in this age group.)

## Feelings

Besides respect, there is one other important thing that many fail to consider, and that is emotion. Just think about it. Almost every event that we do involves emotion, and sometimes very strong emotion. Anniversaries and weddings are very special emotionally. Just think about a couple that has been together for 25 or even 50 years. So many things have been shared together, some bad and some good, but it is very emotional for them. What about a newlywed couple starting out their life together? Think of all the emotional situations that they have gone through together: when and how they met, their first date, their first kiss, and on and on!

To respect the emotional aspect of the DJ-client relationship, ask questions, then just sit back

and listen. Of course, each couple is different, and you have to discern what is important to each one, but this shows that you care and you are interested in them personally. It makes you involved in their story, a part of the celebration. These emotional tidbits can be invaluable to us for this simple reason. The wedding day is one of the most personal and emotionally charged days of anyone's life. Use this fact to create something special for your clients, something that they will treasure and remember for the rest of their lives. If you show that you really care about them individually, it will never come across as "just another job"!

Instead of it being just another gig, we now have the opportunity to really shine as an entertainer and planner by showing respect for our clients, incorporating and including these strong emotions into making it an event of a lifetime.

Yes, it does take a little more time and effort on our part, but that is what being a true professional is all about. We each have the choice. Will it be "just another gig," with us pick up our money and going home, or will we be a part of an event that our clients will never forget? Our choice is to be merely an uninterested person they do business with or to be a caring, respectful, interested entrepreneur that cares about them and their events. Let's look inside ourselves and say, "Every client deserves my very best effort. I will care about and become emotionally involved with each client, using this relationship to create a special event as well as great memories. I understand that every gig is unique and special. It requires nothing less than my utmost attention, proper preparation and, to the best of my ability, a flawless performance, whether it be a middle school dance or the wedding of a celebrity."

Is it just another gig? NO! It is an opportunity to show what we are made of, what our company stands for, and it is an opportunity for us to show respect, to offer a sincere, caring attitude to our clients. Yes, it's another opportunity to show that we are the best at what we do and to gain the respect that we deserve as an industry of professionals, because we give our very best in every aspect at every event that we book. **MB**

*Paul Kida, The DJ Coach, is a founding member of the Colorado Disc Jockey Association. He owns JAMMCATTS DJ Entertainment ([www.jammcattsdj.com](http://www.jammcattsdj.com)), and is a regular speaker at the Mobile Beat DJ Show. Send any comments on this article, suggestions for future articles or questions to [djcoach@mobilebeat.com](mailto:djcoach@mobilebeat.com)*



**Wedding Theme: Carbon Neutral**

[www.nativeenergy.com/pages/portovert/168.php?afc=portovert](http://www.nativeenergy.com/pages/portovert/168.php?afc=portovert)

Brides and grooms—and DJs—can calculate their carbon impact on the environment at this site, hosted by NativeEnergy.

**Green Power Partnership**

[www.epa.gov/greenpower/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/index.htm)

At this site you can learn more about purchasing green power to offset electricity usage. Plus, find out about certification and verification as a business utilizing renewable energy and making greenhouse gas reductions.

able clothing and organic food. Prince Charles cut into an organic fruitcake and ordered pesticide-free blooms for his wedding to Camilla. And Alicia Silverstone's guests enjoyed organic vegan food, gazed upon pesticide-free flowers, and received recycled invitations. She even wore a ring handed down on her husband's side.

Wedding service vendors are responding to the movement. New York's OZOcar offers hybrid limousines; Organic Vintners, based in Boulder, CO, helps wine lovers find all-natural vintages; and the Houston-based Green Hotels Association will locate accommodations at facilities committed to saving water and energy and reducing solid waste.

Across the United States, in addition to pesticide-free menus, caterers are offering fine china and linen napkins instead of throwaways. Numerous web sites help newlyweds establish donations to charities that benefit the environment, offering guests an alternative to heavily wrapped presents.

"Going green is one of the great business opportunities of the 21st century, and the rapid growth of green weddings and green wedding consulting groups is not surprising," said David Cooperrider, a business professor at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, in an article on the MSNBC web site. "In fact, wedding advisers that are not going green are going to be at a competitive disadvantage."

**Green-Jay**

Evan Reitmeyer, owner of MyDeeJay, serving the Baltimore/Washington/Virginia metropolitan area, has elevated sustainable practices in the industry to a new level. The company is the first Green-E certified wedding vendor in the nation and is likely the first 100% carbon-neutral wedding entertainer provider in the United States. Check out Evan's companion article on page \_\_\_ for details on his company's approach to implementing environmentally conscious business practices

**Light Up for Less**

What can mobile entertainers do to lessen their environmental impact?

For any paper product—brochures, contracts, or agreement letters—employ recycled, tree free or FSC-certified paper. Better yet, minimize paper usage via deployment of email and a robust, interactive

online marketing presence.

Drive a hybrid vehicle or, with the incredible shrinking equipment presence, follow Craig Brown's lead and buy "a smaller van that gets better gas mileage" rather than drive a gas-guzzling SUV. An added benefit—vans, while not as sexy, tend to have significantly more room than their four-wheel drive brethren.

Regarding equipment, Dave Star of Star Productions, serving Central Oregon, suggests, "Using fewer lights than before or more energy-efficient lower-wattage lighting systems." Or, even better, Brown bought energy-sipping lights: "LED par lights and a Spectrum LED for my light show."

LED power consumption is, on average, approximately 5% of the equivalent brightness halogen or fluorescent lamp. In addition, LED lights generate virtually no heat and, because they are made up of solid state components, they are extremely durable, better able to withstand the rigors of travel and constant set-up and teardown.

**Learning the 3 R's**

On a personal level, what can mobile entertainers do to support green causes? As an older eco-slogan goes, "Reduce, reuse and recycle."

Consider supporting local, non-profit and/or community-based organizations and businesses, in order to lessen your participation in the huge environmental impact of the megacorporations. Subscribe to renewable energy sources (most utility companies now offer customers an option to "purchase" renewable energy). Recycle anything and everything (newspapers, plastic bottles, glass, cardboard, cans, envelopes). Minimize waste as much as possible. Buy products made from recycled goods. Choose reusable bags instead of paper or plastic when shopping. Consider bicycling for errands within a couple miles of home. Link your trips, so you complete errands before returning home for the day. Use both sides of a piece of paper, if possible (even for scratch paper). Outfit your home with fluorescent bulbs.

Only time will tell if "going green" will translate into a lot more of the "green stuff" for mobile entertainers. But, at least, embracing green in your entertainment business and your life will certainly safeguard you against feeling blue about your personal impact on the world. **MB**

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# Eliminate Brides' Indecision Now!

How to become the bride's ally by helping reduce her stress.

By Tom Quiner

President, Breakthrough Marketing, Inc.

**S**tress is the biggest frustration faced by brides. There are many reasons for this stress. As a DJ, you witness many of them firsthand. My company has done extensive marketing research into the minds of the brides over the years. We have surveyed them throughout the country to learn more about their attitudes, their dreams, and their buying habits.

#### SHE Is the Decider

Collectively, brides' stress boils down to simply this: They have to make a lot of DECISIONS. Typically, over 1,000 decisions, according to most wedding planners. And they have to make all of these decisions in a limited amount of time.

Decision-making is always stressful. Making big decisions when the clock is ticking simply heightens stress levels. Be acutely aware of this situation. Create marketing strategies that address and provide solutions to brides. Become their ally and win their business. Let's look at ways to accomplish this:

#### Don't Emphasize Price

When you dangle your price in front of brides, it encourages them to shop price, not people. Nothing increases stress more than increasing the amount of shopping a bride has to do. Rather, you should try to cultivate a relationship with the bride. Make things as black and white as possible, to aid in her decision-making. Tell her, "No price is a good price if you doesn't like the quality of the work," and, "You can't go back and do the wedding day over again."

I just Googled "mobile disc jockey." Four out of the first ten DJs that came up listed complete prices on their sites. For example, one of the first DJs had a price of \$155 per hour. I can imagine a prospective bride musing to herself, "Is that a good price? Hmm, maybe I'd better check around a little bit and compare." So she goes to the next DJ on the list and clicks on his pricing page. However, he doesn't actually give his price. Instead he says, "Please call for price information. It is hard to give an exact price, because every party I do is different. We customize our services to your exact taste and budget. Call me now at xxx-xxx-xxxx. Tell me a little about your dreams for your wedding reception..."

You get the idea. Once the DJ gets the prospective bride on the phone, he or she has a chance to build a relationship. If your prices tend to be on the higher end, this approach is all the more important.

#### Teach Her How to Shop

Most brides call up wedding vendors and ask them for prices simply because they don't know what else to ask. Tell brides the questions they should be asking. These questions can be listed on your website and brochure. They are very effective when placed on the "contact us" page on your website.

#### You might say something like this...

Most brides don't really know the right questions to ask when trying to find the right mobile disc jockey for their wedding. Here they are ...

- Tell me a little about your style.
- What would you say is your biggest strength. Feel free to brag!
- I went to a wedding where hardly anyone danced. What's your secret to getting people onto the dance floor?
- Do you play the music I want to hear? Do you have some songs that are proven winners at weddings? Do you take requests?
- How do you dress?
- Do you have back up equipment and DJs if anything goes wrong?
- What is your price range? How do your prices stack up compared to other DJs in town?

Again, you get the idea. Come up with your own list of questions. You're trying to create a situation on the phone where you are building a relationship, not just talking about price. These questions clarify brides' thinking. They reduce indecision. They get you more sales from appreciative brides who trust you.

#### Q & A

For some DJs, the goal is to set up an appointment and meet in person. For others, the goal is to close the sale over the phone. That is more likely to happen if you have cultivated a relationship with your prospect. Questions are a good way to get the ball rolling.

Demonstrate that you care. The essence of selling to brides is this: Brides buy from people they like and trust. If you show brides that you care about their wedding dreams, they are going to like you and trust you. Your caring attitude is best communicated (in person and over the phone) in what you say and how you say it.

Perhaps the best way to begin this process is to ask a bride questions. (This assumes she's not already asking you the list of questions listed above!) Get her talking about her dreams. Then react with enthusiasm to her dreams. People love it when someone shares their dreams. The best wedding professionals are truly excited about the dreams of their customers. It's what makes this business so great. If you can't muster up excitement for a sweet, young bride's dreams, maybe you belong in a different business.

You can convey a caring attitude in the words you use in your brochures, letters, and websites, too. Here are three fine examples:

1. *More than ever, our generation is appreciating what is truly important in our lives. Family. Friends. Relationships. Love. God.*

2. *More than ever, people are finding renewed hope and commitment through these basic building blocks of life.*

3. *More than ever, people feel a need to embrace and celebrate the sacred. Perhaps there is nothing more sacred in our lives than the union of two lives in marriage. There is nothing worth celebrating so much as love.*

#### Make it Easy

People love when things are quick and easy. Brides sit up and take notice when wedding vendors make things simple. You can visibly see the stress melt away as indecision is replaced by decisive action. One way to accomplish this is in your writing. Here's one classic example: *Selecting the perfect DJ for your style and budget is easier than you think. There are three simple questions you should ask, and one you don't need to ask, that will give you a pretty clear idea. Quickly.*

Another way is how you choose to present information. Don't offer too many choices. Choices can create indecision. Indecision can create stress. Stressed brides will want to move on to wedding vendors who know how relax them.

Use testimonials. Including these in brochures and websites builds trust. The question has been asked of me, "Do people really read those quotes?" Yes, they do. Do they really believe them? Yes, they do if they sound real and if they use sufficient attribution. A quote is more believable if it uses a person's last name as well as first name. It has more impact if you list the city in which they live. It has more impact yet, if you list their occupation. And so on. Be sure to get signed permission to use a person's testimonial.

Testimonials make it easier for brides to pick you, because real brides have been happy with you. This reduces indecision. You and the bride both win when that happens!

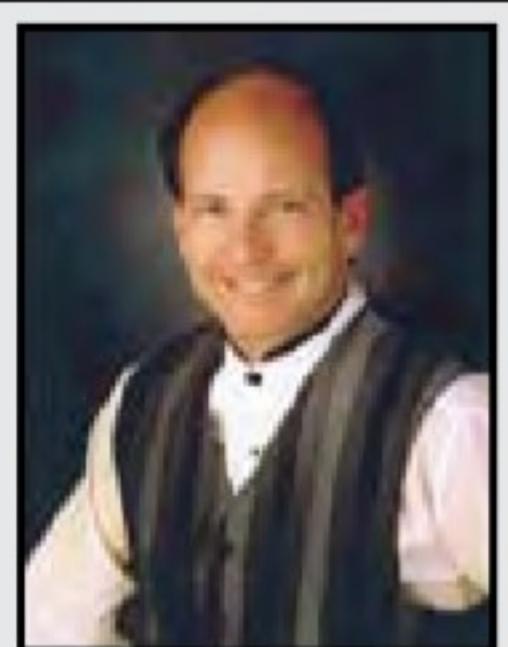
Everyone wants less stress in their lives. As you market your services, you can benefit greatly from reducing the bride's anxiety level by making decisions easier. The tools presented here should provide a good basis for improving your ability to reduce the pressure on your "stressed-out" potential clients. Less bride stress equals more sales for your DJ service. **MB**

Tom Quiner is President of Breakthrough Marketing, Inc. For 21 years, they have been creating winning marketing campaigns for DJs and wedding professionals. You can view their products at [www.breakthroughbrochures.com](http://www.breakthroughbrochures.com). Or call 1-800-810-4152 today for a free sample kit.

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Brian Doyle, **DENON & DOYLE, CA**

"We booked 25 weddings within the first 90 days after using our first brochure designed by Breakthrough. Karen & Tom are **gifted marketers, knowing just the right way to deliver our message to our customers.**"

Kelly Farmer, **PARTY PATROL ENT., TN**



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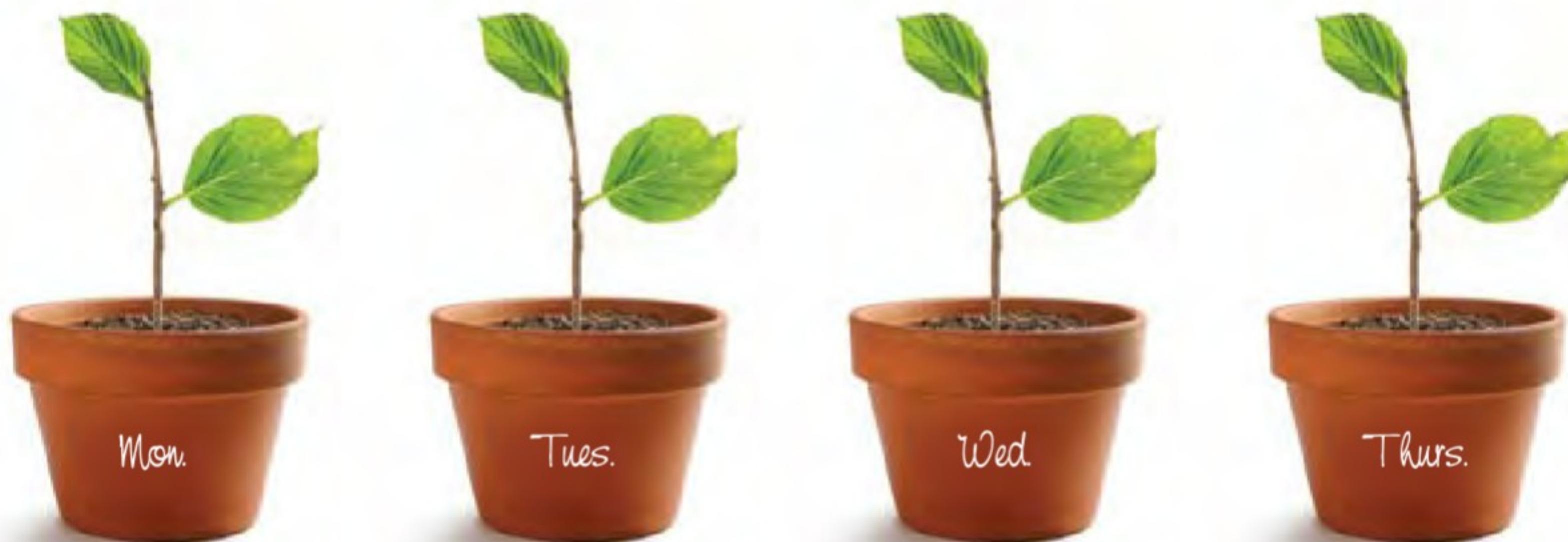
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# Get the Midweek Gig

How to plant and grow your non-weekend opportunities

By Rob Johnson



**G**etting and keeping midweek bookings can be the key to making a good living in the mobile entertainment business. DJs all over the country are seeing a decline in Friday and Saturday bookings. The number of new DJ companies has increased at such a rapid pace that quality events are, in many cases, not as available.

There are a lot of options available to increase your income during the week. Karaoke has been around a long time. However, while some KJs enjoy a high level of success, the majority of the country seems to be filled with really low-paying karaoke shows.

#### Sowing the Seeds

Last issue we focused on trivia and game shows. This time around, I want to talk about how to find and keep those types of events. Just last week, I got a call from a DJ who told me his success story. He called a bar and told the owners that if they would pay for the advertising, he would come in on a weeknight and do his trivia game for two hours for free. They agreed, and he went in and did the show on an off night. It was a huge suc-

cess and the bar owner scheduled him for a regular show on another open weeknight.

I am not a huge advocate of doing "free" shows, but it can get your foot in the door. I am all about "showing" what I can do for a bar or venue rather than "telling" them. The excitement created by actually performing for them is well worth your time and effort. Keep in mind that they may not even know what you mean when you say you can come in and do a trivia night. You have to educate them about why they should spend money on you.

#### Raising the Bars

Since I am not a fan of "free," I have tried a few creative ways to do "free" shows for bars and still get paid. One idea was working with radio stations and providing promotional events to bars where the sponsor, rather than the venue compensated me. These situations get me in front of the venue's crowd at little or no cost to them. I have also been approached by local beer distributors and liquor reps to host events at bars—another great way to get yourself and your unique product in front of people. A wise man (thanks Cap) recently reminded me that the more people you perform for, the more potential future clients see you. Many of these midweek events lead to corporate work or even weddings.

#### Young and Old Alike

I recently talked to an entertainer who is concentrating on nursing homes and retirement facilities for his midweek events this summer. Does ANY

demographic watch more game shows than retired people? I doubt it. What a great gig—midweek work DURING THE DAY! Not only is this be a great way to earn some additional money, but also, if you are like me, you love performing for an appreciative audience, one that loves to have some fun and excitement added to their day.

During the school year there are a lot of opportunities for midweek bookings during the day. It is great to realize that the same schools that may beat you up over price for DJing their dances also have money budgeted for "educational" events that they can use for game shows and trivia based contests at their assemblies. Contact the principals of your local schools, or better yet, go directly to the school district and try to get ALL the schools to participate. I have also had success by going to the PTAs (parent-teacher associations) and pitching them on my "educational" events. There are a lot of different midweek opportunities out there, you just have to go after them.

If you have any success stories like those mentioned here that you would like to share, please email me at [rob@triviaproducer.com](mailto:rob@triviaproducer.com). **MB**

*Rob Johnson is the spokesperson and National Representative for DigiGames. Prior to switching DigiGames two years ago, he used Creative Imagineering products for more than six years.*

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**LET THE GAMES BEGIN**

# Video Games Unleashed: A New Youth Event Trend

RockBand, Guitar Hero, DDR with Cobalt Flux,  
and other video games, all add a new level of interactivity

By Ryan Burger

A Screen shot from GUITAR HERO; Insets, below:  
three screen shots from ROCKBAND



**B**eing a bunch of retro video game junkies, when my team and I heard of other disc jockey services trying to break into new markets by dressing up *Guitar Hero*, we were inspired to dive into taking video games to a whole new level at after-proms, community festivals and other events. So, in our proposals to schools and after-prom parent committees to use our Game Show DJ shows (utilizing Digigames and Creative Imagineering hardware) we added a pitch for what we called our "BCP Arcade." After-proms are popular in the Midwest as a way to keep the kids from going out after their prom and causing trouble in town. It gives them a great activity that usually lasts from midnight until around 4 AM, and it's a great growth area for mobile DJ services. It also provides an opportunity for several of your DJs to double up on their events on a Saturday night.

#### Prepping for the Games

If you already offer video DJ services or are considering such after reading other articles in this video-focused edition of *Mobile Beat*, you have a lot of what you need already, including sound and video projection. The video game-specific stuff and LCD screens will cost you around \$1,000 to \$1,500 per system (check the sidebar for our inventory). Besides the normal DJ systems that are used with these, you will find it's basically about adding some additional basic lighting and a powered speaker or small audio system.

#### Selling the Sizzle

Our sales material makes the important selling points: "BC Productions brings the video game experience to a whole new level. This isn't about hooking up your Playstation® to a television—it's about making it a whole new EXPERIENCE, with party scenes including DJ and club lighting, real guitars converted for *Guitar Hero*®, staging, full sound reinforcement and much more. This scene is HOT! We feature Rock Band, *Guitar Hero*, *Dance Dance Revolution* and all the other latest video game crazes! You can count on the BCP Arcade to have the latest and hottest interactive games available!"

The key to selling each game system is to not rely on the standard hardware that everyone has at home and plays regularly. The kids will drool at Peavey RiffMaster Guitars that feel like real guitars, but have *Guitar Hero* wiring (see ac-

companying review), while the Pro Power Station Guitar Stacks make everything look authentic. Cobalt Flux Dance Dance Revolution pads are built to take a beating, are easy to set up and get rolling. Load in and load out on these is extremely easy and they stay in place once put down and put to the test by young feet.

Just like our "regular" game show offerings, video games have gotten us in the door with schools that looked at us as "only" a disc jockey service. They've hired us for this new offering as a unique company among the competition. You can market this option separately and also in conjunction with your other services. For example, at the last event of the season for the BCP Arcade, the DJ service that had previously performed for 1/4th of the amount of our after-prom event price was turned down by the prom committee, since they had now met us and wanted to see what options we could provide for next year's prom.

#### Rolling Out the Show

At the beginning of course, with this being a totally new kind of event for our company, we occasionally came across issues where we didn't have everything we needed at the events and had to go back to our offices to get additional gear. I recommend that you make sure to bring lots of adapters and do a test run-through at your office before you roll it out. In our case we were able to set up on Saturday morning before rolling to the afternoon/evening weddings and proms that we had contracted, tear out of our events quickly, and had no problem getting there in time for the events that started at midnight.

Actual set up of the video game equipment is very easy, as it all works off standard RCA-type consumer cabling. Hooking up the upgraded control gear, like the Peavey RiffMasters and the Cobalt Flux DDR units, to the Sony Playstations® is just as easy. Setup of projection screens and LCD televisions is just like a normal video situation. We chose to keep the cases out in plain view and use them as part of the scenery, as it made things look the part with a rock show and dance club scene.

We recommend that you have another person there to turn things on and start them up unless you are 100% positive that your staff will make it from their other events in time. Ask for assistance from the committee planning the event, and have at least one adult from the school at each station who knows the students. This will help you with keeping control of any issues that might arise with the students. Also, encourage the school to come up with some prizes for the top scores in different levels. The adult helpers can keep track of scoring for the students. Also, plan on having one of your staff per "show" or at least two total staff on four systems, if you have assistance from the school committee.

It does help to know the games and be reasonably good at them, but it's not essential because the kids playing the game WILL know more than you do about them. Just make sure you can get around in the systems and have them well-prepped with additional sounds downloaded for Rock Band and other games that have add-ons. The kids will be expecting the games to be fully decked out. We downloaded an additional \$30 worth of songs into the X-Box.

## The BCP Arcade

The key is doing it right, not just taking your Playstation® and hooking it up to your DJ system. You need to invest in gear that is at least a cut above what your client already has. Invest in gear like Peavey Riffmaster® Guitars and Cobalt Flux Dance Pads and make your show worth thousands of dollars per event!

#### Rockband Show

7.5' x 10' ScreenWorks projection screen  
X-Box 360 - Rockband Box Set  
2000-lumen LCD projector  
4 x 15' USB extensions  
2 x powered full-range speakers  
Set of PAR cans (LED preferred)  
Audio and video extension cables

#### Dance Dance Revolution Show

32" LCD Television with Marathon Professional case  
Playstation 2 - DDR (several editions)  
2 Cobalt-Flux Commercial School Pads (cobaltflux.com)  
1 powered full-range speaker  
2 Chauvet Min Spots, 2 Chauvet Min Washes and various other lighting effects plugged into basic switch panel.  
8' x 10' backdrop with "club scene" picture  
Audio and video extension cables

#### Guitar Hero Show

32" LCD Television with Marathon Professional case  
Playstation 2 - *Guitar Hero* (several editions)  
3 Peavey AG Riffmaster Guitars (*Guitar Hero* Model)  
Riffmaster Power Power Station (amp/mixer/guitar stack)  
2 LED PAR cans or color washes on the floor, set to slow chase  
8' x 10' backdrop with "concert scene" picture (courtesy of Chauvet)  
Audio and video extension cables  
If facility allows, fog is recommended

#### Taking It Even Further

We have also invested in some used full-sized arcade video games that we have cleaned up and are going to be rolling out at future shows this summer and next prom season. These games can be acquired from video game operator auctions for an average of \$100-\$250 per game—much less than the \$1,000 to \$2,000 they originally sold for.

With the Rockband and *Guitar Hero* shows, you can also dress them up with costumes, props and more. It's all about how far you have to take it to get the gigs and have repeat customers. With our events, we fully expect renewals for their 2009 after-prom events...and we will take things even further then, with these games and whatever other latest, greatest games are available! **MB**



# Become a Guitar Hero with a Peavey AG RiffMaster

Tools for a more realistic  
game experience

By Bret Agard

**P**eavey recently released a line of licensed guitar controllers for *Guitar Hero*. Crafted from life-size Peavey electric guitars and made of real wood, Peavey AG RiffMaster guitar controllers are modified for play with guitar-based music video games. Each guitar neck features five colored fret buttons placed among real frets on a genuine rosewood fretboard, with the familiar strum bar and whammy bar mounted to a basswood body.

Consumers can choose from a bank of 20 custom designs, including exclusive designs from iconic rock artists; or they can upload their own JPEG image to the Custom Graphics portal at [www.peaveycustomshop.com](http://www.peaveycustomshop.com) and design a one-

of-a-kind RiffMaster.

All instruments are wireless and come with a receiver. Currently, all the RiffMaster guitars Peavey makes are compatible only with PlayStation 2 units. They will be coming out with PS3 and Wii guitars later this year.

The Riffmaster Power Power Station (amp/mixer/guitar combo) is creatively put together so that you can slide your PS2 into the unit so it is hidden from site. The stack is designed for the newer thin versions of the PS2. The only thing that gamers see is the wireless receivers.

## Mobile Rock Show

I found the guitars to be very sturdy to use, and when placed on a guitar stand, very classy looking. People who have used them at our events have commented that they do weigh more than the guitars that they are used to playing at home, but after a game or two, they found it a lot more enjoyable to have the feel of a real guitar in their hands. The "wow factor" for our clients was incredible. One parent who worked at another school said that they had *Guitar Hero* at the other school, but the real equipment made it more of a fun experience because "it was not stuff that my son could go to the store and buy."

Since our after-proms, we have had four city festivals contact us because they heard of our "real" equipment and have hired us to come out, instead of bringing their own units from home.

The guitars run on AA batteries. The regular Duracell® batteries I used lasted for about 10 to 12 playing hours. When I switched the batteries out, I used Lithium Energizer® batteries and had more than 16 hours of playing time.

In the fast-changing world of mobile entertainment up-sells, these Peavey AG RiffMaster guitar controllers could be just what you need to stay ahead of the game.

More information is available at [www.peavey.com/controller](http://www.peavey.com/controller). **MB**

Peavey® AG RiffMaster™ Guitar Controller is a real Peavey Guitar that's sure to quench your audience's thirst for the authentic rock star feeling.



# Wii Weddings

Even at receptions, the video game alternative is often welcome

By Ron Ralph

Video games have become so popular this past year, I decided to offer Wii at weddings. Brides and grooms are looking for interactivity other than karaoke for their receptions. Games such as Guitar Hero, Dance, Dance Revolution, and Wii Sports provide the perfect solution for creating a fun and exciting atmosphere.

## Pitching It

During my initial consultation with the bride and groom, I ask how they envision their wedding reception. If they are looking for a formal and elegant reception, I do not even mention interactivity. But if they are looking for a lot of fun, I give them alternatives for ice-breakers, interactive dances and games. I tell them I have different options available that most other DJ's in my area don't offer, such as Game Show Mania ([www.creativeimagineering.com](http://www.creativeimagineering.com)), the Newlywed Game, and Wii. Once I get to the Wii, I explain that Wii appeals to all ages of all skill levels, and that it would be something unique, fun, and exciting for guests to do during the lull periods of their reception. Once I mention Wii and the games I have available, it pretty much sells itself.

## Game On

I have one reception coming up soon where the father of the bride called and booked me because he had seen the Wii in action at a recent event. He said he and his daughter, (the bride) were "big into Guitar Hero" and they both wanted to have a Guitar Hero contest after the formal dances. During that wedding, I will be connecting the Wii directly to my sound system and using a rear-screen projector placed right beside the dance floor. They want to prove to their guests who the real "Guitar Hero" of their family is!

I usually set up the Wii in a separate area, away from my main sound system. I bring a 32" flat screen HDTV, two GH controllers, two DDR Dance Pads, plus the Nerf Sports pack with golf clubs, tennis racquets, and baseball bats. I announce that Wii is available during the cocktail hour and

again after all of the wedding formalities. My 17-year-old daughter is my assistant and supervises the Wii.

As of this publication, I have 15 weddings booked in 2008 with Wii, and 3 already for 2009. I plan to add more games as they become available. Guests of all ages enjoy playing games—so why not try it? **MB**



# Support Your Local Dancers

## Colbalt Flux Arcade DDR Pro-Platform

By Bret Agard

**W**hen we looked at getting into Dance Dance Revolution (DDR), we wanted to approach it like we did for all of our other game show systems. We did not want gaming platforms that the everyday people could buy for their homes.

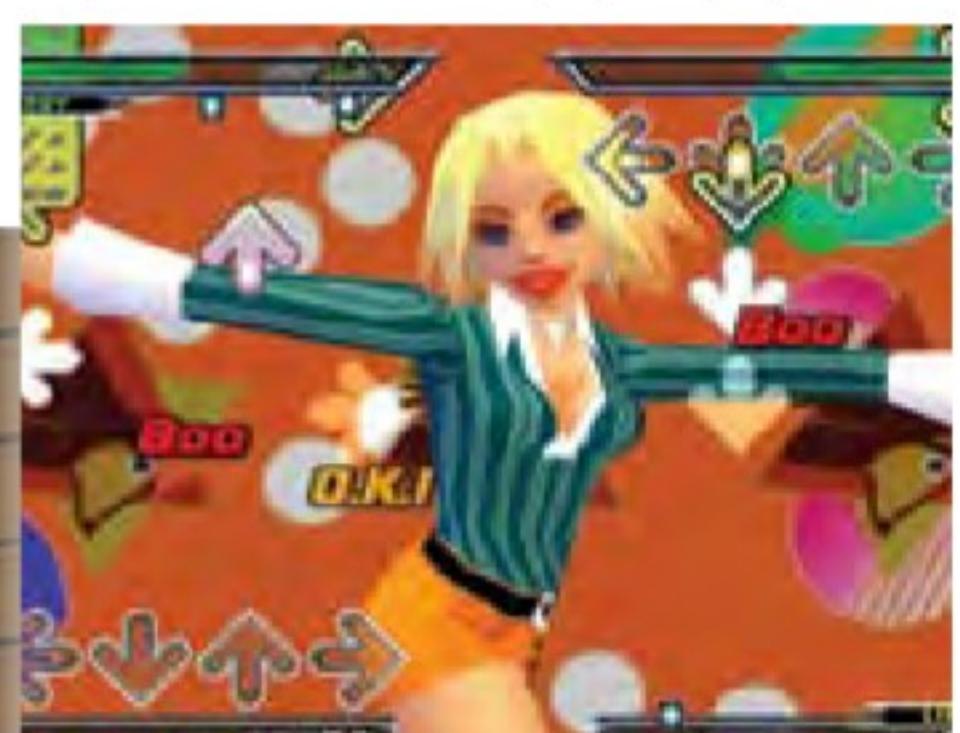
We used the following criteria: easy to transport; easy to set-up; something that could take a lot of abuse from players; one person could lift and set up alone. After doing some research, we found Cobalt Flux ([www.cobalt-flux.com](http://www.cobalt-flux.com)). They have a line of commercial grade DDR pads called The Arcade 6 EX Pro-Platform System.

Each dance pad weighs about 50 pounds and is only about two inches thick. When we first saw that they were that thin, we were concerned that they could not take a beating. However, they're made from an ABS commercial base material, with spill-proof, anti-static, dust- and debris-proof, "sealed" switch enclosures for each platform button. Each pad can take up to 600-pounds of pressure—ie, a lot more than we would ever have jumping on it at one of our gigs.

The spill-proof claims were put to test at one of our after-proms when someone spilled bottled water on one of the pads. It was very easy to clean up with a towel, and the pad continued working without any problems. We have since used it at two other events and have had no issues with it.

The pads come with a 10-foot cord, allowing for plenty of room between the video screen and the players. As for setup time, in less than five minutes we were up and running.

Of four events where we used the pads, two were played on wood gym floors, one was on a smooth, clearcoat-sealed, indoor concrete floor, and the other was on the newer type of "rubber" basketball court. We had no problems with scratching on any of the floors. On the concrete floor, we experienced some slipping of the pads when we had players playing on two pads at one time. We fixed this issue by picking up some inexpensive non-slip shelf



liner from a department store.

These pads exceeded our requirements and expectations. The students who used them said they liked the feel and thought that the play "buttons" were larger than what they had with their home versions of DDR. This made it easier for them to play because they had more error room for mis-steps. All in all, the Cobalt Flux pads were a hit, and greatly enhanced our video game production. **MB**

# Rockin' the Joint with JTR

JTR's Triple 12x and Growler speakers shake the foundations

By J. Richard Roberts

**A**fter a few years of being a professional disc jockey, one gets to know the familiar companies with their specific brands and products.

Often overlooked, however, are new companies that have much to offer. One such manufacturer is JTR Speakers, an outfit that produces speakers with the look and attention to detail, combined with a forward-thinking design, that will turn some heads given a little time. As part of my never-ending quest for new and exciting products, I was invited to road test two of the company's flagship products: the Triple 12x and the Growler.

On first look, I was delighted by the style of the enclosures, which are not entirely conventional. Both the Triple 12x and the Growler are designed with what I like to call the "new school mentality," which basically means more sound from smaller/sturdier enclosures. New school mentality in the JTR brand means 18mm birch construction coated with an even glaze of the ever-popular Line-X spray-on bed liner.

#### Compact Performance

At 1000 watts RMS per side, the Triple 12x units took on any and all normal music frequencies with ease. As for hardware, each Triple 12x consist of two 12" vented subwoofers along with a single 12" midrange coaxial (fitted with a 1" compression driver). A great positive characteristic of the internal voice coil is an increased resistance to microphone feedback at close distances—perfect for those venues where entertainment is shoved into a corner amongst guest tables, with a small setup footprint.

The Growler proved to be the perfect accomplice for the Triple 12xs. With a frequency range of 46-110Hz and an RMS of 1000 watts, all of my tests (ie, sonic abuse) were a walk in the park, with surprisingly tight response. Even though the Growler is small, its airflow and design allow it to function much like larger folded-horn subwoofers, a good fit for those who travel with passenger vehicles or have otherwise limited storage space.

At the events I took the JTR system to, it lived up to the precedents set back in the test facility. One event in particular was a middle school dance with approximately 200 kids in attendance. Not only were the vocals and my announcements crisp and clear, but the mid-range frequencies (which are ever-important on studio-produced hip-hop) could be heard and enjoyed by all—which at this school is generally a feat, considering the room layout and ambient noise.

Transporting the JTR system was easy, aided by the Line-X coating and the ample handles on both models. The Triple 12x features three handles per side that allow easy loading and lifting of its 72 pounds from almost any angle. For the Growler, 98 pounds is a small price to pay for the sweet rumble produced. My only concern with the Growler was the lack of casters, considering its weight (a situation which will likely be remedied on later generations, I'm sure).

As a system, I used the combination of two Triple 12xs for mains and one Growler for low end. At every event I did, from the aforementioned middle school dance to a small high school prom to a wedding, the system was both understated in the way that it did not stick out in a visually displeasing way, while also being very "present"—you knew it was there in a big way, acoustically. I really liked the mix with the combination of the Triple 12x and the Growler, but I also knew that for any large (200+ attendance) applications more mains and subwoofers would have to be added, and easy task with the relative simplicity of non-powered speakers.

If my first test of JTR speakers is an indication of things coming down the pipeline, I'll be excited to hear, see, and feel their products for years to come. They performed for me during one of our most important seasons of the year with great results—it just goes to show that sometimes you have to dig a bit to find that diamond in the rough. [www.jtrspeakers.com](http://www.jtrspeakers.com) **MB**



# A Nu Way to Create the Mood



Some ambient ideas for using the Numark NuVJ video controller

By Dan Walsh

**I**t used to be that only high-powered "artistes" got to project interesting images on fashionable art gallery walls or on the huge video walls that are now standard equipment at rock concerts.

But today, the rest of us have also been empowered to join in the video creativity. The convergence of affordable digital camera technology to capture images, user-friendly software for editing and crafting content, and wider Internet bandwidth encouraging the sharing of visual creations via the likes of YouTube®—all this has given the "power to the people" when it comes to video production.

#### Video Vibe

How does this relate to DJs? The term "VJ" has been bandied about a lot lately, with many different nuances of meaning. Here I'm considering anyone who takes a step beyond simple video playback to be a VJ. As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, there are many ways to augment one's audio and MC capabilities with a visual element. One avenue is found in the form of "ambient" video.

By ambient video, I mean simply video that is not a direct portrayal of specific event subjects, such as the bride and groom, mitzvah honoree, etc., but is either totally abstract (such as looped graphic animations) or of a more "background" nature. The latter category presents some interesting opportunities for creativity. For example, at that 50th anniversary celebration, along with photo montages of the happy couple, you could also show stock footage of, say, Paris, where they went on their honeymoon so long ago. Or pick any subject that is important to the people celebrating: the sports they play, the places they travel to, the activities that they engage in. Mix and serve.

Obtaining video footage from the client or creating your own will keep costs down. Another pricier option—but one that guarantees high production quality—is to use video clips from stock suppliers. (There are many; some quick starting points include [www.istock.com](http://www.istock.com), [www.re-vostock.com](http://www.re-vostock.com) and <http://worldclips.tv>, the last one being a good source for city/location clips.) For holidays, create appropriate background imagery or utilize pre-made ambient visuals. Promo Only is a good source for holiday-specific material, as well as other interesting visual content.

#### Cool Nu Tool

Numark's NuVJ unit provides a perfect tool for manipulating your video clips and animation loops, boosting you to the next level of video artistry. Combining an intuitive DJ-style hardware controller and powerful ArKaos software, the system makes it easy to create compelling visuals.

The NuVJ system provides video sample playback, looping, and a wide variety of effects. Simply use the software to load clips into 18 pads

(2 banks of 9) to trigger as desired. To get you started, Numark provides a library of short movies, pictures, and graphic sets.

Once you have your clips loaded, you can apply a host of effects, in real time. Employ the smooth, precise crossfader to control transitions between patterns and functions. Having so many pads and effects available, with proper prep you can create an extensive, constantly changing video show.

For hands-on interaction with your content, the NuVJ features two large wheels for scratching and effect/speed control. You can also sync up your playback with sound via audio-in or an internal BPM generator.

To access the outer world, the NuVJ also lets you connect to external camera or other video input. It will also control other MIDI-compatible software, although the integrated ArKaos program provides ample creative options. And, for those times when being "hands-on" is not called for (or when nature calls) there is an automated play setting for stand-alone operation.

The NuVJ system is Mac and Windows compatible. Go to [www.numark.com](http://www.numark.com) for more. **MB**



# Mixing Images

For DJs building their video setups, the Edirol V-8 by Roland is a video mixer with a lot to offer

By Ian Walmsley

**T**he Edirol V-8, brought to us by Roland Corporation, is a remarkable new video mixer that packs a ton of functionality for professional video mixing. If you are doing live video, running DVD music videos, or both, the special effects add a nice touch to on-demand mixing for your audience to enjoy.

As you can tell from the name itself, there are eight channels of input on the V-8, using BNC connectors. The device comes with four BNC to RCA converters, so using standard RCA devices is

no problem and works very well. The only surprising quirk of this device is that while there are two VGA inputs for computers, you can only use one of them at a time (by setting a physical switch on top of the unit). In other words, you can't cross-fade live between two computers connected to the VGA ports. Considering the explosion of computer-based video playback among mobile entertainers, this is a major disappointment.

#### Powerful Features for Visual Fun

The ideal setup can be achieved with this device by setting up a couple of live action video cameras around your dance floor or facing the crowd and a couple DVD players for canned music videos. Using the V-8's embedded video transitions, you can crossfade from live action to music video very easily. You can also blend the two inputs together and have a music video overlay your live action feed. This is great for gigs with huge crowds, when you are using huge video displays or projectors. There are plethora of other interesting effects (which Roland calls "filters") included on the device to help you spice up the fades. "Afterimage" creates a slow trail behind of fast moving objects. "Feedback" reminds me of negative imaging, where it takes the strong colors and makes the brighter. "Flip" should be self explanatory. "Emboss" makes the image look as if it were carved in stone. Those are just to name a few of the 150 effects that can be used by simple press-to-click buttons located on the appropriate control side of the mixer. While the fader transitions are minimal, the click-on effects add a lot of interest. I have to admit, Roland does make it a bit of a challenge to get all the fun started, by providing a hefty, at times perplexing 100+ page manual to slog through. But I digress.

#### Maintaining Your Image

The output functionality on this device is its best feature, which includes a separate monitor out with on-screen prompts, including a BPM reading to help sync your video tracks together via the audio signal. The multiple outputs allow for many large screen display devices or projects to be hooked up. The V-8 provides an alternative S-video connection as well as two BNC connections, so most devices will work seamlessly with it. The helpful Multi-Monitor feature lets you track up your next video or view live video on demand, but having to have extra monitors for this setup could be expensive and a pain to move with your mobile setup. This device would work a bit more conveniently in the club context, where it could be stationary.

In comparison to other products on the market, this device solidly does what it says it will do. On the downside, it lacks a convenient built-in LCD screen like other DJ-centric units, and, as mentioned above, is missing the ability to use the two VGA ports at the same time. It also has quite a learning curve if this is your first video mixer in. But, when you look at price, this device wins, as the suggested retail price is just under \$2,000. Roland maximized its "bang for the buck" with the features included. When you look at it next to other video mixers on the market, the V-8 stands out against the others in its range, but doesn't tower over them. If you've been in the game awhile, and have an extensive on-site video setup, the V-8 might not have everything you need to run your whole show (although multiple units might do the trick!). But the bottom line is that this is a great device for a DJ company just getting seriously into the video arena. [www.edirol.com](http://www.edirol.com) **MB**

# Engaging Website Visitors

How to transform your website from a billboard into an interactive tool

By Jim Weisz

You could have the best looking website around, have a ton of great pictures, excellent copy and still not get half as many leads as you should be getting. So what's the problem? There could be a variety of things going on but one guess I would have is you're missing a CTA. A what? A CTA—that is, a call to action. The call to action is very important since that's what takes someone from being just another visitor to your website to picking up the phone or e-mailing you.

A call to action can be the difference between a completed sale and someone visiting your website, seeing what they like, but continuing on to another website instead of contacting you. Gerry McGovern, considered to be one of the top experts on websites and website content, makes some great points about calls to action. Here are some interesting notes taken from his website about how a call to action can affect the number of leads that come from your website:

Microsoft changed one word in a particular heading and saw a 300% increase in the number of people who clicked on it.

A client of McGovern's changed three words on a particular webpage and saw a 30% increase in sales inquiries.

Another McGovern client repositioned a link on its web page and saw \$70,000 in sales from this link over a two-month period.

A business-to-business client changed the call-to-action language on its product pages. Qualified leads rose from 100 per month to over 200 per month. Nothing else was changed.



Without calls to action, the bride might have just bookmarked the site to check out again later...and quite likely would have never gotten back to it.



As you can see, even very minute changes can positively impact the number of leads you get from your website. This is why website copy and calls to action are so important.

#### Calls to Action, DJ-Style

A good example of a call to action on a DJ website is an availability checker. A prospective bride is perusing your website, skimming the text and looking at the pictures when she sees a box that says "Select your event date to instantly check availability. Request additional information at no obligation."

Without even really thinking about it, she inputs her wedding date. It brings up a new page that says "Good news—we are available for the date of your event! The next step is to get a free, instant price quote using our automated online system." On this page it's asking for her contact information and information about her wedding. She enters in all the information so she can receive her instant price quote. The best part about this is this can be done from anywhere at any time. If she's at work and can't make calls about her wedding, or it's 2:00 AM and there's no way she'll get someone on the phone, she can still get a price quote.

After she hits submit, a new page comes up with her price quote. She can stop there or go even one step further and hit the "book online" button at the bottom of the page. Using that button she can print a contract and even pay her deposit online with a credit card. If she decides she wants to think about it a little more or possibly talk to the DJ company before booking, now at least the DJ company has her information to

follow up on. Without all these calls to action, the bride might have just bookmarked the site to check out again later...and quite likely would have never gotten back to it.

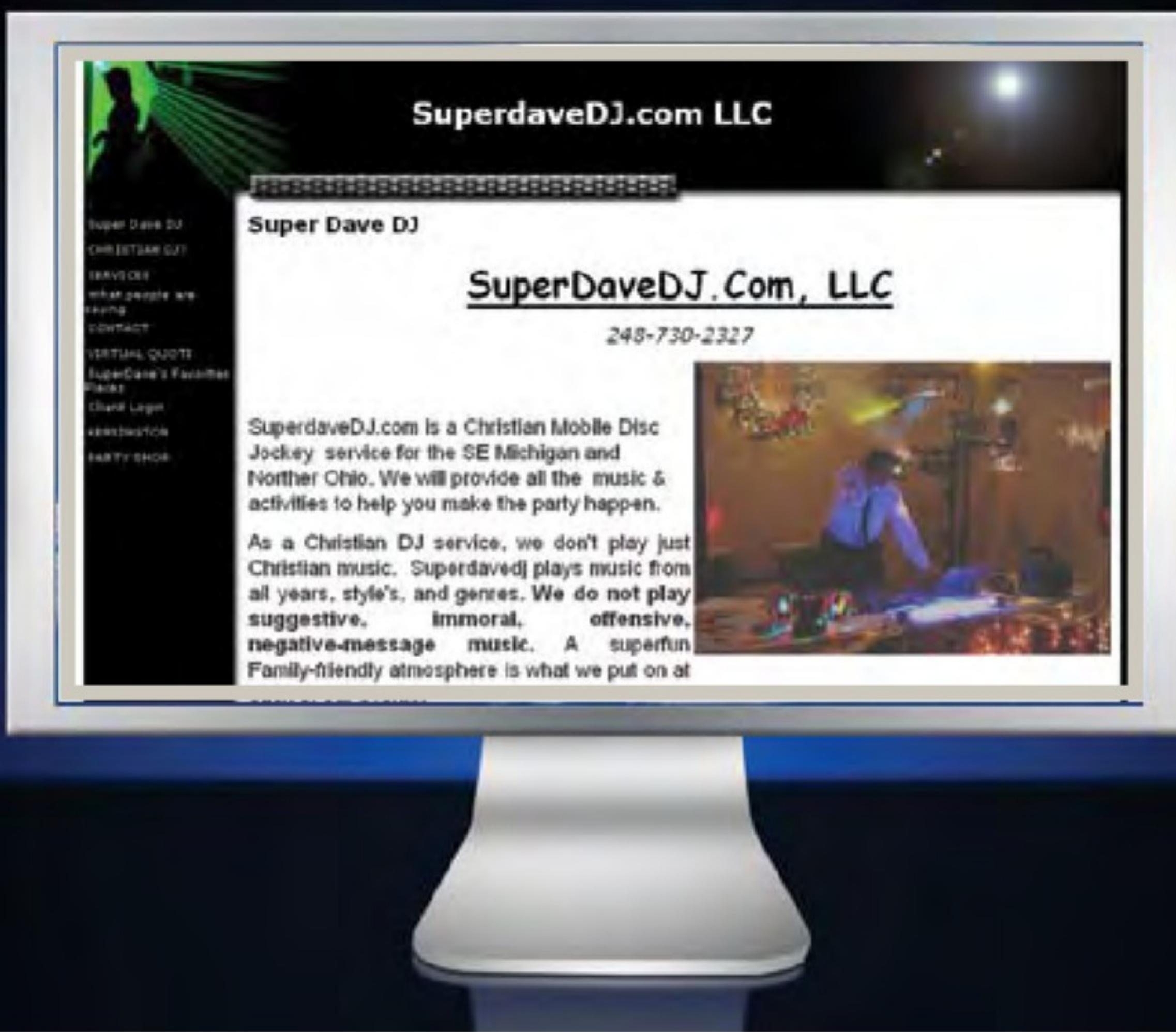
Other examples of calls to action are special offers to get them to call or book by a certain date; or a link in your text that says "contact us" that takes them either to a form to e-mail you or your contact information. While it may seem very simple, having your phone number at the top of every page of your website is another call to action. That way instead of hunting around your website for a phone number they see it at the top of every page and if they want they can pick up the phone and call you right then.

Something I've been seeing more often on DJ websites is a button that says "Call me now." You enter in your phone number and then it initiates the call between the company and the potential client. For example, someone clicks that button on your website. Then you get a call to your phone that will start to ring after you pick it up like you've just called someone. This is convenient for them and is another call to action.

Whether it's an extra level of web functionality like an availability checker or something as simple as a phone number on every page, make sure to include some definite calls to action on your site. That way, your site can make the transition from simply being eye candy to helping you really bring home the bacon. **MB**

*Jim Weisz has been a DJ since 1999, primarily serving the wedding and school dance markets. Born and raised in Chicago, Jim relocated to Dallas in 2003 to take a position with JonesTM (formerly TM Century). Jim has spoken at several DJ conventions about websites and has also written numerous articles for Mobile Beat about websites, software and a variety of other topics. Jim can be reached at [jim@discoverydjs.com](mailto:jim@discoverydjs.com).*

# Website Once-Over



The following is a website that was submitted to me by a reader for constructive criticism. If you would like your website to be considered for a future review, e-mail your website address to [jim@discoverydjs.com](mailto:jim@discoverydjs.com).

This time we take a look at [www.superdavedj.com](http://www.superdavedj.com), the website for SuperDaveDJ.Com DJ Service, out of southern Michigan.

## GOOD STUFF

Staying with the theme of this column, you have a good call to action with your button that says "virtual quote."

You have your location and phone number right at the top of the home page.

Giving credit and linking to the person who wrote "What Is A Christian DJ." It's nice to see

it being done, since very often this article has simply been copied and pasted into other sites.

## SUGGESTIONS

Be consistent with capitalization. Some of your buttons are in all caps and some aren't. If you're trying to draw attention to some of them, I'd recommend changing the color of the text for those buttons.

You have a banner ad for a concert on your home page. It's nice that you want to promote it, but why take someone away from your website?

And, following up on that comment, make sure all outbound links (anything that goes to a new website) opens in a new window. That way, if they do click on it, after they close that window they'll be back at your website.

You have a bunch of cluttered banner ads at the bottom of your home page. I would recommend moving them to a links page if you really want them on your website.

Don't underline text unless it's a link.

The link for "party shop" didn't work when I tried clicking on it. Dead links only detract from the positive perception that someone might get from the site, so make sure to remove them if they're no longer valid or fix them if necessary.

List some cities that are close to you/that you want to DJ more in. That way, when people search for that city name along with DJ your site will have a better chance of showing up.

I'd recommend re-writing all of your packages offered for your quotes. There are numerous errors under the emcee package and the other packages really don't give much information about what the client is getting.

You have one picture on the home page—that's all I saw on the entire site. Either add a pictures page or add some pictures to the other pages on your site. (Remember to keep them small enough for quick-loading, like the one you already have. **MB**)

# Why

## You Do the Things You Do

Clarifying your  
business mission statement

By John Stiernberg

**E**ach of us has a unique set of education, experience, aspirations, and motivations. Consequently, each mobile entertainer is likely to answer the "why" question a little differently from the next person. What makes us tick? What motivates us? How does the answer to the question "Why am I in the mobile entertainment business?" relate to my career and business plan? This article explores the topic and offers suggestions for defining your business mission, vision, and values.

### The Five Motivations

Whether you are full time or part time in mobile entertainment, your motivation is likely to fall into one or more of the following categories:

**1** Making a living. This ranges from "pay the bills" to "get rich." Some people are motivated primarily by money or financial need. Everyone needs some source of income. For those of us who are not already independently

wealthy, the prospect of making a living doing something we love (like working in mobile entertainment) is attractive—a positive motivator.

**2** Fulfilling a dream. "I've always wanted to do something in entertainment," or "If only I could be in the industry doing it full time..." Some of us may want to see our names on the marquee, make records, or win awards. Others aspire to business or technical support roles, but still want to be involved in mobile entertainment as a career.

**3** Creating a legacy. "When I'm gone I want people to remember my work (or influence on the industry)." Looking a little further into the future, some of us are motivated by the idea of creating a company or a body of work that takes on an identity or a life of its own.

**4** Benefiting other people. "Take care of my family" or "Inspire others." Some of us focus on our immediate family and friends while others are driven to benefit the broader industry, community, or society as a whole.

**5** Adrenaline rush. "There is no other feeling like the energy coming from a crowd during a show." This applies whether you are on stage, backstage or in the audience, and it can also be a positive motivator.

A possible sixth category is "all of the above." See how this sounds to you. "I've always wanted to do something with mobile entertainment that will benefit mankind—the big audience out there. If I'm successful, I'll make a good living along the way and be remembered as a positive influence on the world. When I see people dancing and hear the applause during a show, I remember what it's all about—great music and great sound."

Sound idealistic? Maybe so, but it's a whole lot better than, "Oh well, I might as well get a job in the DJ factory because it's better than working the counter at McDonald's for minimum wage all my life..."

### The Profit Motive

Profit is a Fundamental Issue for Entertainers. Here's a simple formula that drives all businesses: Revenue - Expenses = Profit.

Profit is simply the money left over after a business pays the costs of doing business. If you are a one-person DJ business, profit also represents the money that is available to pay for your life: food, housing, clothing, recreation, education, etc.

Some mobile entertainment people are put off by the concept of profit, feeling that the idea of having something left over after "working hard for the money" is evil, tacky, lowlife, non-artistic, anti-art, or whatever pejorative word comes to mind. Here are my observations on this situation, gathered over a 30-year period.

**1** Unless you are independently wealthy (some are, but relatively few), the need to make money is a motivator for mobile entertainment people.

**2** The general public buys concert tickets, albums (on CD or online), merchandise, and related material, created by musicians, promoted by the industry—and supported by mobile entertainment people. Fans “vote with their pocketbooks,” meaning they buy what they like and come back to the shows, venues, and acts that they enjoy on a repeated basis.

**3** To judge whether a specific performance is “good” or “bad” from an artistic standpoint is largely subjective. What appeals to me may or may not appeal to you, and that’s OK. Diversity keeps things interesting. However, quality entertainment can be measured objectively and enhances audience satisfaction for any show.

#### **What is the business point? Here it is:**

Artistic integrity, business integrity, and commercial success all go hand in hand. You don’t need to compromise quality or artistic values to make money in the entertainment business. Also, simply being commercially successful does not assure positive reviews by the critics, parents of the bride and groom, or any other measure of success. Top selling acts don’t necessarily win technical awards. Remember, I’m talking about the mainstream here, not the exceptions publicized by the media.

#### **How to Write a Mission Statement**

A mission statement answers the question “Why are you in business?” Whether you are a self-employed DJ, owner of a modest mobile entertainment fleet, or in a management position at a larger firm, articulating the answer to this question is the foundation for your strategic planning. This applies, whether you work full time or part time in the industry. Here are some guidelines for writing your mission statement.

**1** Strong missions statements are usually one or two sentences long. I’ve seen mission statements that have gone on for two or three pages of cryptic single-spaced text. What’s wrong with this is that it’s harder to remember and may not put emphasis in the right areas when it comes to planning and taking action.

**2** Short mission statements are often supplemented by clarifying comments. These most frequently take the form of “vision statements” and “values statements.” This is a good way to deal with the temptation to make your mission statement too long.

**3** Vision statements describe your view of the future of the industry or market. Vision statements are part prediction, part trend analysis, and part context information.

**4** Values statements are your code of ethics, or the operating principles that are 1) fundamental to your business and 2) unlikely to change over a long period of time.

If you work alone or own the company, you can assert your own values in your business. If you work for someone else, it is important to make sure that your personal values are reasonably aligned—congruent—with those of the organization. This helps prevent problems, but more importantly, drives the business in a positive way.

#### **Writing It Down Is Liberating**

A rule of thumb in strategic planning is “If it’s not written down, it’s not a plan.” Sure, you have to think through the issues, and yes, you may have a good memory. Yet, there is something about the act of writing that is both clarifying and liberating.

The other real benefit of writing everything down is that the material can then be

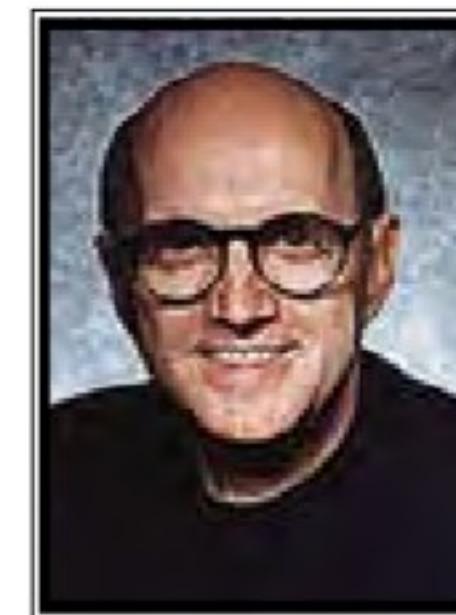
**Articulating the answer to the question “Why?” is the foundation for your strategic planning.**

shared with others: your business partners, co-workers, employees, family, investors, vendors, or other stakeholders. For now, I suggest that you take a stab at drafting your mission statement, or revising the one you currently have. Start by completing the following sentence:

#### **We are in business to:**

Congratulations! You’ve taken the first step in understanding the fundamentals of business and in taking your mobile entertainment business to the next level. We’ll expand on the idea of business planning in future articles. In the meantime, good luck, and don’t forget to write it down! **MB**

*John Stiernberg is founder and principal consultant with Stiernberg Consulting, the Sherman Oaks (Los Angeles) CA-based business development firm ([www.stiernberg.com](http://www.stiernberg.com)). John has over 25 years experience in the music and entertainment technology field. He currently works with audio and music companies and others on strategic planning and market development. His book *Succeeding In Music: A Business Handbook for Performers, Songwriters, Agents, Managers, and Promoters* is published by Hal Leonard/Backbeat Books. Contact John via e-mail at [john@stiernberg.com](mailto:john@stiernberg.com).*



# Whose Mix Is It Anyway?

## (Part 2)

Moving beyond "proprietary" mixes to DJs learning what works...from other DJs

By Mark Johnson

**In the last issue, I wrote about using another DJ's mix and his view of what's considered intellectual property. This topic stepped on a few toes, as many DJs claim some form of ownership on the mixes they've created or the configuration of amps and speakers they've come up with.**

### Set Me Up

I often think it might be useful for Mobile Beat to publish a list of popular mixes every month. It would contain a handful of three-song sets that work well in a number of different catego-



ries. The readers would submit their favorites and (with the exception of the DJ mentioned in my previous article) MB could actually list the DJ who offered the mix. That would surely inspire other DJs to take these clues and offer more 3 song mixes. I have a few

of my own that are useful but I'm always willing to learn more.

I'm aware that I don't know what song always goes well with whatever other song. I usually work from requests, so that limits my flexibility, although I do add songs to the requests that are related. Thus, the core of the "set" is comprised of guest-suggested songs, while

the overall play list may be a mixture of theirs and mine.

For example, I am pretty weak in Contemporary Country music mixes. Sure, I've got many hits-discs and other compilations, but sequencing the particular songs together in a pleasing fashion is a little hard for me. Listening to CMT's countdowns doesn't help in creating three-song sets, rather it's just a reference for which songs are currently popular.

If Mobile Beat were to publish a Top 100 3-Song Mixes list like their Top 200 Song List then that would help us DJs who are a little rusty in some areas to get better.

Even if you consider yourself an expert in many genres, you should always have an open mind to learn what has worked well for other DJs. Gathering party mixing success stories from other DJs can only help your own future parties.

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### Playing by the Book

For those of us who need a little mixing help (and who doesn't, really?), I just came across a handy little book called *The Pocket DJ*, by Sarah Lewittinn, a former writer for *Spin Magazine*. The book is nicely divided into useful sections such as Essential Genres, Essential Artists and Celebrity Playlists, and it wraps up with some interesting mobile DJ-friendly playlists.

Long-time mobile DJs have endured many, many overlapping music styles over the years. After a while they all appear to be variations on each other. Unlike DJs who try to be masters of all styles, our guests are a lot more focused on just a few of their favorite genres. So you just have to make sure you understand their preferences enough to spin a satisfying mix.

So, if you're like me and can't tell Ambient from Trance, then this book is for you. For each of the sections there is a listing of at least 20 songs with their artists. Thus, if you recall a specific event where you came up a little short, chances are that this book has that genre. It's almost giving you a shopping list of songs to acquire.

In *The Pocket DJ*, I found that even a time-honored genre like Motown can offer up a small treasure trove of interesting gems that I would not have normally considered. As I've reviewed many of the common genres, I've seen "new" songs that I can add to my mental library, which may come in handy at future events.

I also found a good handful of artists that I

Even if you consider yourself an expert in many genres, you should always have an open mind to learn what has worked well for other DJs.

never really knew how to categorize present under one genre, and from there I could identify similar songs and artists that would go well together.

In the book's Essential Artists section there is the obvious list of DJ-friendly songs, listed by artist. At the end of each artist's page is a tag line stating that if you like the artist shown, then you should like "these other artists." Some even have a small bio or interesting facts on that artist.

The last section of the book contains playlists for specific occasions such as Back to School, Bar Mitzvah Jams, Car Songs, Duets, Entrance Songs, Graduations, Quit Your Job Songs, DJ-Karaoke/Air Guitar Songs, Loud Sing-Along Songs, Pool Parties, Slow Songs, Somber Songs, Valentines Day, Workout Songs and even 10 (count 'em, 10) alternate Happy Birthday Songs.

Three Wedding playlists include Cocktail Hour, Dinner Music and Reception. There are also lists for Opera, Jazz, a few kinds of Country, specific decades, and many other topics, to help you round out your overall musical expertise.

Whether you're just starting out or are a seasoned professional, this book will surely add to your musical knowledge. Rarely is a book about music aimed at the general public able to be applied to the mobile DJ business, so this is a real find.

### Mixing Reality

Whether the help comes other DJs or from a book like *The Pocket DJ*, it seems logical to use whatever resources you have available to improve your sense of which songs go well together. I don't think the few DJs who may be like the one from my last article and are paranoid about sharing what they've come up with should worry. Every DJ is ultimately going to end up using his or her own musical sensibilities, often combined with the wishes of their clients, to achieve the best mixes they can. **MB**

*Mark Johnson is a long-time mobile DJ and has written for Mobile Beat for years, giving his insightful and often incisive perspective on many business and operational ideas. His articles grow out of his own experience and his observations of other DJs during his travels. Always providing an alternative view, his previous articles can be found at [www.mobilebeat.com/archives](http://www.mobilebeat.com/archives).*



# Replicating Success

A change in perspective is necessary to repeat your successes

By Mike Fischer

## "Well, that bit worked at the last party..."

**E**ver utter this lament? Ever succeed with a comic anecdote, game, dance instruction element, a dance set, audience-involving bit at one event, perceive a similar situation at another event, execute the same bit, maybe even perform it a bit better... yet struggle to find reception? Ever morph into a specific type of entertainer, find success, then, eventually learn that your services are about as popular as a Driving Your Children Safely workshop hosted by Britney Spears?

Yes, it's true: Any entertainer who has any significant lineage has experienced such a moment. If an entertainer claims such an experience has never happened...well, either they have not performed at enough gigs, they are not doing much beyond playing music--or they are not telling the truth.

### Only Wanna Be with You

In 1994, Hootie and the Blowfish released their debut album, *Cracked Rear View*. The public flipped over the collection of power pop songs. The album sold more than 16 million copies, spawned four hit singles, earned the group a Grammy for Best New Artist, and was the best selling album of 1995. The group's next release, *Fairweather Johnson*, considered by the group's members an even stronger collection of songs than those featured on their first release, started strong after its 1995 release but, ultimately, sold only 25% as many units as their debut album. Why? Timing? The right music at the right time? Who knows?

### Rock Me, Amadeus

In 1984, *Amadeus*, a cinematic depiction of the life of composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, earned eight Oscars, including best actor for one of its two nominated stars, F. Murray Abraham, who played Antonio Salieri, Mozart's jealous rival (in the movie, but not so much in real life). Despite his

exceptional stage chops, have we seen much from him since? So little has he appeared on the silver screen since his Oscar win, that Hollywood has dubbed subsequent repetitions of the phenomenon the "F. Murray Abraham Syndrome."

Abraham is not the only actor to be smitten by the curse of the Oscar. Brenda Fricker, Linda Hunt, Marlee Matlin, Louise Fletcher, Adrien Brody and Robert Benigni all won best acting Oscars and their careers following the award have not exactly included a series of well-received or well-attended films.

### Tumblin' Dice

For every Rolling Stones, there are dozens of one hit wonders like Zager and Evans (remember "In the Year 2525?"). For every Madonna, there is an amphitheater full of Toni Basils. For every Jay-Z, there are street corners filled with Gerardos. May sound odd, but sometimes the most difficult challenge in entertainment is to replicate success. Certainly, achieving initial success is daunting, but repeating may be an even more elusive goal.

Mobile entertainment offers equally intimidating challenges, sometimes year to year, trend to trend, or even event to event.

"I did a game show as part of a company Christmas party and did not fully appreciate that it was a rather conservative group. Some of the questions were a little too risqué (though, totally PG) for the audience," offered Matt Bixby, owner/operator of Matt's Entertainment, serving the Willamette Valley in northern Oregon and southern Washington. "Did a very similar show for a younger, more relaxed group—and they loved it."

So, why does one bit succeed at one or several events yet stumble like an intoxicated guest at another?

### Spinning Wheel

While a color-by-the-numbers answer does not rise to the surface, a few ideas might help insure the odds are stacked in your house's favor.

Treat each event, each situation as unique, a select opportunity to create a memorable experience.

Former ADJA president, author and entertainer Peter Merry is the Pied Piper of personalized entertainment. And, in a competitive, iPod®-infused, cookie-cutter environment of public perception, approaching each event as an improv player approaches each bit—with an open mind, plenty of tools at your disposal and an eye toward creating the unique—may be one of your best sales and performance strategies. Certainly, Merry has touched a nerve with this seemingly radical tactic in the mobile entertainment community.

### Preparation, preparation, preparation...

Preparation encompasses a number of different levels. The first is the level of the personal.

With iPods, the internet and affordable powered speakers, the days of simply spinning discs are disappearing like glazed donuts at a cops' convention. Clients want entertainment; so possessing a variety of skills (i.e., emcee, dancer, comic, game show host) and ideas offers you the best odds to create a memorable experience for your clients and guests.

The second is the client level. "I learned I really need to get to know my audience ahead of time, and it might not be best to go with only one person's opinion," said Bixby.

"If planning a company party, don't just communicate with the head of the committee, but rather try to get more feedback from different committee members. Have them write down their opinions separately so one voice doesn't 'color' another."

While input is critical, being open to modifying the entertainment program as opportunities on the floor and in the crowd dictate (as long as you are not straying from the client's explicit desires) will allow you to actively support a great time for all.

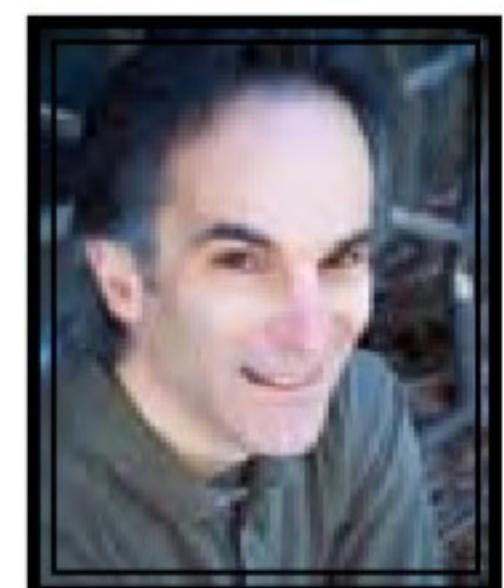
### Struggle is an opportunity, not a failure

From the ashes of discontent often rises the phoenix of great memories. "I see 'bombing' as an opportunity for greatness," opined Bixby. "I've tried to embody Johnny Carson's 'I'm even funnier when the jokes are terrible' mindset. Oh, how I loved the gleam he'd get in his eye when the show was not proceeding according to plan."

### Take a Chance

What do you do when the bit, the routine, the set does not proceed according to plan? That may be a better measure of your moxie as an entertainer than repeated success.

So instead of lamenting the lack of success of a bit, chalk up struggles as a learning experience and continue to seek to create unique, entertaining, audience-directed elements for your guests. You'll increase your odds that you will not contract the DJ strain of the F. Murray Abraham Syndrome. **MB**



*Mobile DJ, dance instructor, emcee, voice actor, writer, teacher, and improv comedian, Mike Fischer owns and operates Dance Express mobile entertainment, based in Bend, Oregon. A four-time presenter and host at Mobile Beat conventions, Mike has been expanding the public's definition of the mobile entertainer since 1986.*

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## TRACK ONE FROM PAGE 6

established in 1976, and Bruce was eager to glean information from the man who started it.

So eager was he, it started a series of international meetings that began in the early hours of the morning, several times a month. Bruce would leave his home at 3 AM, drive five hours to Rochester to meet Bob and I for breakfast, and then head north for Toronto for lunch with Dennis and his Canadian connections. By mid afternoon he was on his way back to Philly. Within three months he announced plans for the 1991 East Coast DJ Forum in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania.

Whether or not trade show producing was yet to be for Bruce, one thing happened at the East Coast Forum that September. The creation of the American Disc Jockey Association was announced, and within four months the organization had six chapters in their formative stages. The first-ever ADJA newsletter appeared in the sixth issue of *Mobile Beat*. It was really quite a time, to see all these things evolve, the young association using the new magazine as a vehicle to reach the masses, in turn validating our purpose. As previously mentioned, there was no internet, so outside of Yellow Pages® phone book lists compiled by national companies, this was as cutting edge as it could be.

Soon, however, the age of innocence was over. Heroes and villains emerged in the new industry, and everyone declared their own picks on who was wearing the black or white hats. Rumors abounded that associations were pulling scams on DJs—as if there weren't easier ways to defraud people for a quick buck. In a world full of megalomaniac egos, it became hard for the average DJ to sort it all out.

But one thing is certain, Bruce Keslar was a pioneer and a leader. He was there before most of what we see today. Beyond the ADJA, he was an instrumental force in CAMEO (Canadian-American Mobile Entertainers Organization) and NAME (National Association of Mobile Entertainers).

As current ADJA president Dr. Drax has stated, "Today we enjoy a vibrant DJ industry that is continuing to exceed expectations. For many, the base of this structure will always have the name Bruce Keslar etched into its foundation, as one of the founders who cared enough to roll up his shirtsleeves and engage in a concerted effort to unite DJs..."

*Mobile Beat* was and is media. We report the industry news, we don't make it. Bruce was one of the first who did make it. In 2006, when the *Mobile Beat* Lifetime Achievement selections were made, it was a pleasure to bestow upon him that award. He absolutely deserved it.

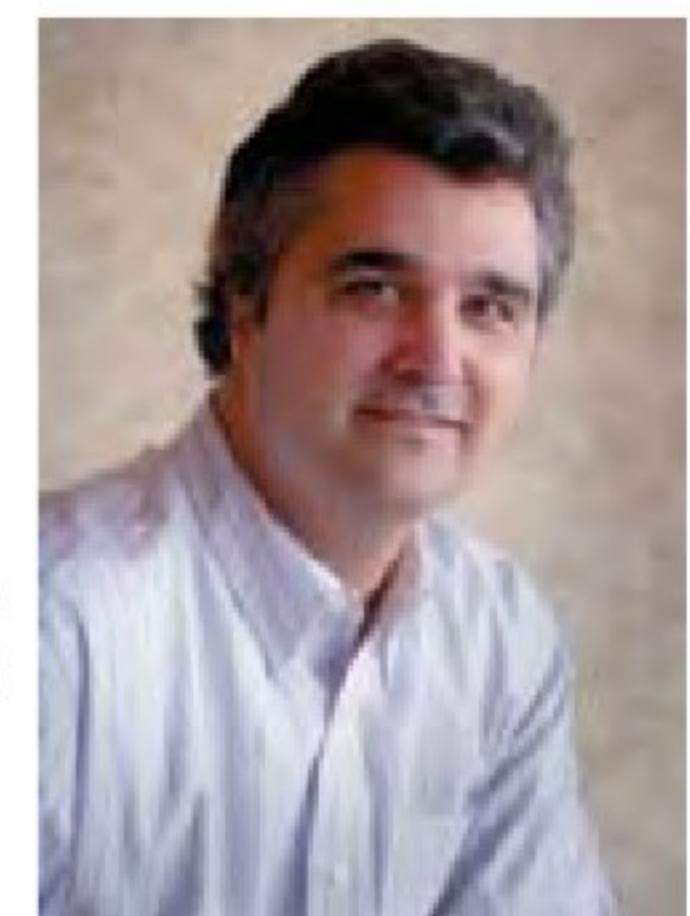
All of us here at *Mobile Beat* extend our deepest sympathies to Bruce's family and friends.

—Mike Buonaccorso **MB**

Mike Buonaccorso is the co-founder of *Mobile Beat* and current trade show producer. His forthcoming book, 20/20: A Clear Vision of the Past, Present and Future of the Mobile DJ Industry will be released in the spring.

## The Stanton Group Promotes Tony Rodrigues to Vice President of Marketing

The Stanton Group ([www.stantongroup.ws](http://www.stantongroup.ws)), a leading audio equipment company operating Stanton Magnetics, Cerwin Vega! and KRK Systems, is proud to announce the promotion of Tony Rodrigues to Vice President of Marketing. Prior to this position, Tony has been responsible for new product development while serving as the Vice President of Technology and Business Development with The Stanton Group. In addition to his current duties, Tony will now also be accountable for providing the same strategic direction to the entire marketing division. His new responsibilities will include directing internal and external communications for all brands while strategically managing branding initiatives. As an executive operator, the brand directors and the product marketing group will report directly to him.



"Based on his experience and performance in his previous role, we are looking forward to seeing Tony apply his wealth of knowledge and strategic leadership to the marketing team," said Stanton Group CEO Tim Dorwart. "Tony possesses a unique knowledge of all facets of our business which enables him to operate on a macro level, ensuring the company stays on target to achieve our market share and revenue goals. We are truly fortunate to have Tony at the helm," added Dorwart.

## He's Back! Tenaglia Returns with a New Compilation, New Single and First-Ever Ibiza Residency

After a six-year hiatus from releasing compilations, DANNY TENAGLIA is back with double-CD set *FUTURISM* (Tommy Boy). Single "The Space Dance," the first new original music from Tenaglia since 2004, was inspired by his sets at Space, the Ibiza superclub where he will also hold down a weekly residency – his first ever on the island – throughout the summer.



The adventurous, addictive *FUTURISM* captures the sounds that the beloved DJ/producer is playing right now. Featuring minimal tech grooves like "Filthy Phunk" (Shinedoe), "Rolling Brooklyn" (Luca Bacchetti), and "I Ment To Be Sharp" (Davide Squillace), the set is unmistakably of-the-moment. But unexpected explosions like "Tiir" (DJ Mosoga); haunting, disembodied vocals; and Tenaglia's own secret samples bring the mix to deeper levels. It's techy, it's tribal, it's twisted, yet somehow timeless: It's unmistakably Danny.

"If you think of the word 'techno,' it's just short for technology," says Tenaglia. "What was Kraftwerk doing? What was Larry Levan doing up in the booth, with reel-to-reel and reverb? They were being experimental."

At the time of his last compilation, "Back To Basics" (2002), Tenaglia was a resident at New York venue Vinyl/Arc. His weekly Be Yourself party was one of the city's last havens for music lovers. When the club closed in April 2004, Tenaglia took to the road, and became one of the most successful touring DJs in the world. To date, he has traveled to over 28 countries, playing for crowds from 200 to 200,000.

A slate of tour dates supporting *FUTURISM* will carry Tenaglia from coast to coast and ocean to ocean over the upcoming year, but the summer belongs to Ibiza. Tenaglia will hold down a weekly Thursday residency at legendary White Isle venue Space, the first of his career. Guests DJs and lineups will be announced soon.

### FUTURISM Track Listing:

#### CD One

1. Indigo Bay – Yello
2. Metaphysical Vibe – R.T.A.
3. Bodydrummin' – Afefe Iku
4. Can't Cheat With Concrete – Guillaume & The Coutu Dumonts
5. Cyclette – Jitzu & Sire G
6. Hankkofloppe – Wighnomy Brothers
7. Tiir – DJ Msoga (Burchan's Bomb)
8. Asylum Sneaker – Magik Johnson
9. Rolling Brooklyn – Luca Bacchetti
10. Filthy Phunk – Shinedoe
11. Desire – GummiHz
12. Work Me – Bumpin' Ugly
13. Emergency – Mastiksoul
14. The Space Dance – Danny Tenaglia

#### CD Two

1. Mid Life Crisis – Fred Giannelli
2. 3Tempo3 – PuNto
3. Murder Murder – Silent Servant (Burch Bomb 2)
4. Morodem – Phase
5. Your Face Is A Mess – Gel Abril
6. Mothership Pt. 1 – Dave Angel
7. Beatific – Daniel D
8. I Ment to Be Sharp – Davide Squillace
9. Big Bang – Hertz
10. No Revolution – Joris Voorn
11. Birth – Peter Horrevorts
12. Twisted (Got Me Goin' Round) – Ultra Nate
13. Perfect Moment – Andreas Heiszenberger
14. Space Dance Vox – Danny Tenaglia



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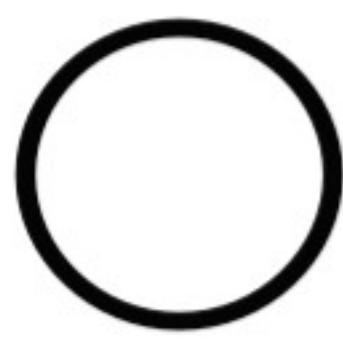
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# Can You Really Afford Your Web Advertising?

Running some real numbers gives you a clear idea of the true cost

By Todd Donald



One of the biggest unanswered questions, (especially for newer DJs), is how much money they should spend on their advertising and where they should spend it. As I've mentioned previously, there are some things that really get me to plunking away at my keyboard. Most recently, it was a post at my favorite DJ forum, Start.ProDJ.com that inspired me (found at [start.prodj.com/viewtopic.php?t=45629](http://start.prodj.com/viewtopic.php?t=45629)). It basically began as a thread where a DJ was asking for recommendations for good website designers.

## Weaving the Web of Advertising

As the topic evolved, it made me consider the cost of advertising online for DJs, and whether or not they can afford that cost, or manage the cost effectively enough to justify it and still profit from their DJ business, whether part-time, full-time, or multi-op. How much should DJs spend on their website and web advertising? That's the million-dollar question! To answer it, we'll need to take 10 steps back in order to move one forward. This is often the toughest thing for a DJ with a new site, who only wants two things: site visitors and contacts.

Sure, having a new website is exciting, but, slow down pardner--business is business. If your profit margin does not reflect a large enough piece of the pie in your financial accounting software, you won't be in the DJ business for long!

**The Fact:** Online advertising is by far the most affordable form of marketing for DJs, yielding potentially huge returns for tiny investments. Websites and online ads are cheap in comparison to other traditional forms of advertising, and the Internet is gaining a continually larger portion of the advertising market. **HOWEVER...**online advertising, like any form of advertising, can quickly get lopsided and result in break-even or even profit loss scenarios, if not thought about carefully.

## Counting the Cost

In order to properly assess your online advertising costs, it's necessary to look into some statistics and do the math. Simple stuff, but often overlooked. To predict how much money a DJ should spend on advertising and where, we can begin with some widely accepted metrics for Internet advertising and marketing:

**Website Client Conversion:** The typical metrics for how many site visitors are needed before a sale or conversion takes place fall between 1% and 2%. That means that for every 100 site visitors, you may get one or two conversions (someone who calls, writes, fills out a form, etc). This number might sound terrible, but it's not when you consider that a website can be accessed anywhere in the world, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. If you were selling something that had a huge profit margin, (like an electronic download for example), you can quickly see why online advertising and websites have proven to be very profitable. If you sold software and charged \$30 for a downloadable copy, and each copy yielded \$20 in profit, for every 100 visitors you could be profiting \$40. Multiply that times millions of site visits per month and you can begin to see how this model works quite well.

The value of conversion gets a little fuzzy when considering "other" things that might not yield huge profit, or that might be less sought after. In the case of a mobile DJ, if you're just one person running a part-time or full-time DJ business, your capacity for output or production is limited, which means your revenue has a cap. If you're one person, you can only do X number of gigs per year, meaning that the potential for revenue will be limited to how many gigs you can do and how much you charge. Figuring out your profit potential is determined by many factors, but will ultimately be a result of how much you've pocketed as profit after subtracting what you spent vs.

what you made. Everything must be considered: the cost of your equipment, your fuel, your music, your cell phone bill, your computer, your software, consumable goods like party props, your tuxedo, your time and of course the cost of the advertising to book those gigs.

**THINK BIG or THINK SMART?** "More" does not mean more profit! "Better" does not mean better revenues! Things to consider, for sure. A newspaper boy can achieve a greater profit margin than a giant company; but it's all about how much is left over once everything is paid for.

So, using this example of our 1%-2% conversion rate in relation to our single operator DJ business, it begins to look something like this:

Average Party =  $\$500 \times 50 \text{ gigs per year}$   
(that's a DJ working one gig per week roughly) =  $\$25,000 \text{ per year GROSS.}$

Deduct cost of everything it takes to physically do those gigs over the course of a year. This will be your COGS (cost of goods and services). For example: Music \$300 + DJ Gear \$500 + Fuel \$500 + Tuxedo \$200 + Misc. Stuff \$500 = \$2,000 COGS...That means it physically costs you \$2,000

## How much should DJs spend on their website and web advertising? That's the million-dollar question.

to produce \$25,000.

Deduct the cost of everything it takes to generate or support that production: Example; What's your time worth? \$10 per hour? \$20 per hour? \$50 per hour? To perform at those 50 gigs, a DJ may have roughly 8 hours invested in each. That's 400 labor hours, or at \$25 per hour, that's \$10,000 per year. What about your vehicle's mileage plus wear and tear, your cell phone bill, your postage, your cost of faxing contracts, your chewing gum so you have decent breath? It all adds up. So let's say hypothetically we deduct another \$12,000 from our Gross. Our example DJ has just made a NET revenue (what's left over after everything to produce the service is paid for), of \$11,000 or just over 200% of the Gross, which is good!

Okay, so the cost of producing this service makes sense, yielding 200% net revenue for the DJ. But how much does it cost to generate the sales? Unless a DJ only performs at gigs generated by word of mouth or free advertising, that 200% starts to change: Here's an example: Phone Book Ad \$600 + Business Cards \$50 + 1 Bridal Show \$1500 + Misc. Advertising \$600 = \$2750. The DJ's actual PROFIT is actually \$8,250.00 per year, which is still very good and if placed into a savings account or invested in mutual funds could turn into a very nice extra income when it comes time for retirement. After 20 years of DJing, this DJ could have a nest egg of over \$150,000 just from spending 400 hours per year, doing something they loved--playing music!

## Casting the Net

How does this all relate to a website? Well, let's say that this DJ already realizes, like most DJs do, that Internet advertising is not an option anymore--it's a necessity. The DJ has a few choices, but it almost always involves having a website and promoting that website. So let's look at these choices:

**Website Alone:** Average cost of owning website, \$3500, (considering design and updating it four times over the course of a 20 year career) = \$175 per year (negligible).

**Website + Online PPC Ads:** This is where it can get costly. If the DJ's site does not show up well enough on its own at major search engines, it will require Pay Per Click. So, optimistically, we take our typical conversion rate of 1%, and in order to generate 50 gigs online per year, it would require that the DJ's site has X number of unique visitors. It's calculated like this: To generate one booking, this DJ's site needs 100 visitors. For 50 gigs, that's 5000 visitors. Let's pretend that this DJ needs to get traffic from key phrases like Chicago DJ, or DJ in Chicago, or Chicagoland DJs, etc. A realistic cost per click for Google AdWords and Yahoo Sponsored searches might be from 50 cents up to several dollars per click. For argument's sake, we'll use a number of \$1 per click, which is probably lower than what it will really cost on average, but is easy for the math. So those 5000 visitors we needed to generate those 50 gigs cost \$5,000 in one year. That obviously cuts drastically into the DJ's profit margin by loading more into the COGS.

## It All Adds Up

In summary, here's what must be considered when determining what sort of website you want and how much you're willing to spend on website design and promotion:

---

**Your GROSS REVENUE CAPACITY (How many gigs can you do?)**

---

**Your COGS (How much does it cost to perform these gigs?)**

---

**Your NET REVENUE (How much is left after all revenue producing costs?)**

---

**Your AD COST (How much does it cost to generate those gigs?)**

---

**Your PROFIT (Does it make sense after all expenses are paid?)**

Many DJs have had success with homemade sites and lots of online DJ directory ads. Other DJs are convinced that a professional site is all they need and ignore DJ directories. Some DJs will do a little of both, while others will build a website and promote it using sponsored ads and pay per click. Only time, combined with careful ad management and results monitoring, will tell what works best for your DJ business, in your geographic location and in your specific market. Keep track of what you spend and where the business comes from. It all adds up. **MB**



### DigiGames Will Come to You

Are you looking to expand your business options? Is your association looking for fun and informative speakers for an upcoming meeting? DigiGames would like to come to you. They have started a new plan to get out and meet potential customers, and they are so confident in their products that they would love to show them to you and help you get started increasing your midweek bookings. DigiGames talks to many people who are very interested in adding Game Show systems but don't want to make the commitment without actually seeing the equipment in action. A great way to do this is to attend MB in Chicago (July 14-16, 2008) or Las Vegas (Feb. 2009) where the company will again be a sponsor.

If you cannot make those events, or if you want to put together a local meeting or event where DigiGames will come in and give a seminar or presentation (and also provide the fun) give them a call at 1-701-710-1657 or toll free at 1-888-874-8427.

DigiGames will travel anywhere in the country to attend your event or meetings, ready to prepare DJs for the awesome opportunity provided by trivia-based games. It is the hottest thing sweeping the nation. Don't miss out on your share of the income.

### Neutrik Takes on Counterfeitors with New Signature Hologram

Neutrik, designer and manufacturer of the XX series XLR cable connector, continues its fight against counterfeiting by identifying its products with a unique hologram of the Neutrik name and logo, guaranteeing an authentic Neutrik product. In addition to the hologram on its products, Neutrik also includes an authenticity seal on its individual and carton packaging.

The hologram assures customers that they are using original and legitimate Neutrik gear, known for its reliable performance and superior quality. Counterfeit products can be damaging to any company's reputation, when users find inferior performance from what was thought to be a premium product. Because fake components are made of lower grade materials, connections may not be secure, and can lead to a loss in audio quality.

In addition to the recent anti-counterfeit actions in Asia, Neutrik continues to protect its intellectual properties across the globe. To avoid unauthorized exports of Neutrik products from the U.S. to Europe, all shipments are especially marked,

on both the individual packing and the carton packages, "designed and manufactured for the U.S. market." If products with this mark appear outside the U.S., Neutrik is asking its customers to inform them, so the company can take appropriate actions.

"Neutrik is committed to protecting its brand and reputation," says Jim Cowan, president of Neutrik USA. "Our new signature hologram will ensure that our customers receive a genuine Neutrik product."

Neutrik manufactures a wide array of XLR connectors and receptacles, jacks and plugs, speaker connectors and accessories for the professional audio industry.

### World's Largest DDR System

Interactive Productions®, a New Jersey-based corporation, recently unveiled their newest Interactive product, iDance®. iDance is the world's largest Dance Dance Revolution System, allowing 32 participants to play the same game at the same time on the same jumbo video screen. Each player has his or her own wireless arcade-style platform. The company originally planned to offer this system as an add-on to their current entertainment packages. However, it quickly became popular with schools, camps and other organizations where large groups gather together.

That's when the company shifted their master plan and began to market aggressively to clients to generate weekday income. Interactive Productions president, Michael Falgares, tells *Mobile Beat* that at one time this system was designed to help supplement his income but has quickly become the company's number one income generating production. iDance offers schools assemblies that incorporate the fitness and health & wellness initiatives of most states. Schools often opt to choose iDance's fundraising option, Earn 'N Burn®. Students earn money for their school and burn calories all at the same time. While the school earns money, so does Falgares, as the school writes a check to iDance for 30% of the gross collected funds. Fitness centers are also looking at the iDance product as an option to add to their class offerings. Rutgers University has even begun to offer Dance Dance Revolution Multiplayer as a credited physical education elective.



Mobile Beat asked Falgares where he plans going next with this product and he exclaimed, "I want to share it with everyone!"

Part of that plan will involve introducing the World's Largest Dance Dance Revolution System to the disc jockey market in Chicago in July, at the Mobile Beat Chicagoland show. Not only does Falgares' company produce shows for schools and camps but he also sells the system to those same clients for use in their physical education departments. "I cannot possibly tackle the entire country," he admits, "so we are going to offer qualified motivated candidates a successful business opportunity...They will become distribu-



tors of the iDance show and have the opportunity to sell systems to interested parties." Interactive Productions will be offering a limited number of territory-protected licenses to current disc jockey/entertainment companies who have proven track records, in order to take their own businesses, as well as iDance to the next level.

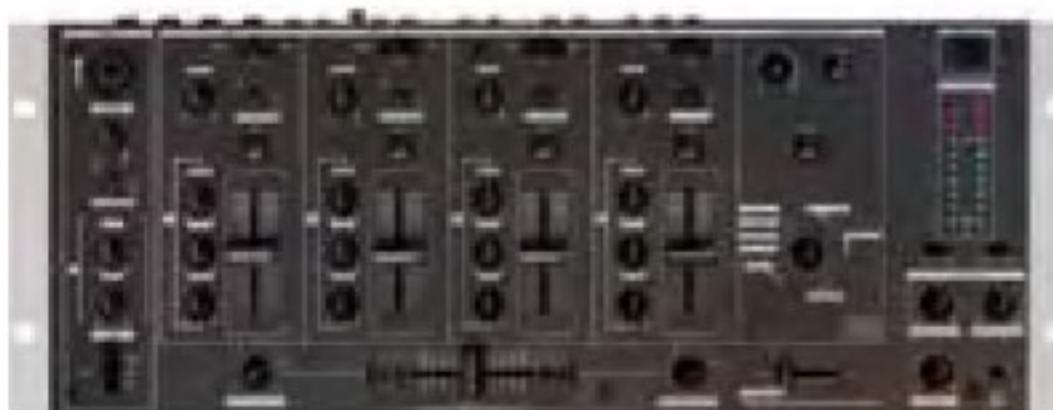
"It's exciting to watch 32 people playing at the same time," says Falgares, "and when we do schools, [watching] over 150 kids playing in team mode, all engaged, having fun and not even realizing that they're exercising at the same time. I have been in the entertainment field for the past fifteen years and I have met a ton of excellent entertainers and smart hardworking businessmen. This system is perfect for them."

For more information on Interactive Productions World's Largest Dance Dance Revolution System, contact Falgares at the iDance Headquarters at (888) 36-GAMES or via email at [mfalgares@interactiveproductions.net](mailto:mfalgares@interactiveproductions.net). **MB**

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#### Let the Voice Be Heard

Offering exceptional value to karaoke jocks and club DJs, **Gemini's** new **MM-4000** is an affordable rack-mount **DJ FX mixer**, especially suited for vocal manipulation and mixing. The unit comes equipped with four 1/4" mic channel inputs (unbalanced), one balanced XLR master microphone input, plus a rotary control FX Selector with Dry/Wet rotary control that lets you choose from 16 high-quality built-in effects, including reverbs, chorus, flange and delays. An assignable user replaceable RailGlide™ cross fader is also onboard, along with balanced XLR master output and master, zone and record RCA outputs for a total package. [www.geminidj.com](http://www.geminidj.com)



#### Capture Your Audio Prey in the Field

Digital audio recording just got more portable with the introduction of **American Audio's** ultra compact **Pocket Recorder**. The battery-operated unit records both WAV and MP3s formats, utilizing two built-in condenser microphones and stereo audio inputs. Also included are two small lavalier microphones for recording speech. With an extremely low MSRP, the Pocket Recorder represents a tremendous value to a wide range of end-users, including DJs, singers, musicians and journalists—anyone who doesn't have a big budget but needs a digital recorder. Featuring 128MB of internal memory, the Pocket Recorder also records directly to an SD card, accomodating cards up to 4GB. A USB port connects the device to a computer for easy transfer and digital manipulation of files. [www.americanaudio.us](http://www.americanaudio.us)



#### Ultimate LED "Flash" Light

The **Flash Shot DMX** from **American DJ** is a compact intelligent strobe light that harnesses the power of LED for mobile DJs and clubs, making it easier than ever to incorporate a programmable LED strobe into a light show. The fixture features 234 bright white LED (rated at 100,000 hours) that produce an output equal to that of a 70W conventional strobe—bright enough to "cut" even in the largest venues, with or without fog. Strobe speed and full dimming are DMX controllable. The Flash Shot DMX can run in DMX (3-ch), Auto Strobe and Random Strobe modes. It can even function as a spotlight using DMX protocols. Since LEDs generate no heat, the Flash Shot DMX will help DJs, performers, and nearby gear stay cool onstage. Weighing just 3 lbs. and measuring 7" L x 7.25" W x 7.25" H, the Flash Shot DMX is a highly portable piece of lighting gear. [www.americandj.com](http://www.americandj.com)



#### Take DMX Wireless with D-Fi 2.0

The **CHAUVET DMX D-Fi 2.0** has undergone an upgrade in its wireless DMX technology, which has been in use for just over a year. By utilizing two DMX D-Fi units, programmers can eliminate long cable runs over distances as far as 120 meters. Version 2.0 features more assignable frequencies, allowing users to run up to 6 separate universes inside one venue, as well as additional options when experiencing signal interference. Multiple units can also be assigned to a single frequency in order to split a signal or cross a vast expanse that would otherwise require long cable runs. LED indicators are included for operating mode, frequency, and DMX signal. [www.chauvetlighting.com](http://www.chauvetlighting.com)



#### In the Studio with Bag End

**Bag End Loudspeaker Systems** has unveiled its new **PM6**, the self-powered version of its popular M6, a small, modestly priced **monitor** with exceptional quality. Its built-in 100 watt internal amplifier weighs just a half a pound. The PM6 is a very compact package, measuring just 14 inches high by nine inches high by nine inches deep. It is loaded with a six-inch high performance coaxial driver with a one-inch coaxially mounted neodymium magnet, soft dome tweeter and weighs just 18.5 lbs. DJs who want to make the best possible custom mixes will want to consider adding a pair of PM6s to their studio arsenal. [www.bagend.com](http://www.bagend.com)



#### SKB's Studio Flyer

**SKB Corporation's Studio Flyer 4U** (model 1SKB19-RSF4U) adds 2 RU to the original 2U Studio Flyer, designed to safely transport laptop computers, mixers, disk drives, audio interfaces or other rack-mount equipment. It features a standard 4U rack mount space and a laptop compartment (interior rack depth to the back expanded to 15.5") with convoluted foam interior in the lift-off lid. A cable pass-through allows the laptop to remain connected to other racked gear. Made of SKB's durable roto-molded polyethylene, the case has four in-line wheels to provide secure rolling with heavier loads. [www.skbcases.com](http://www.skbcases.com) **MB**

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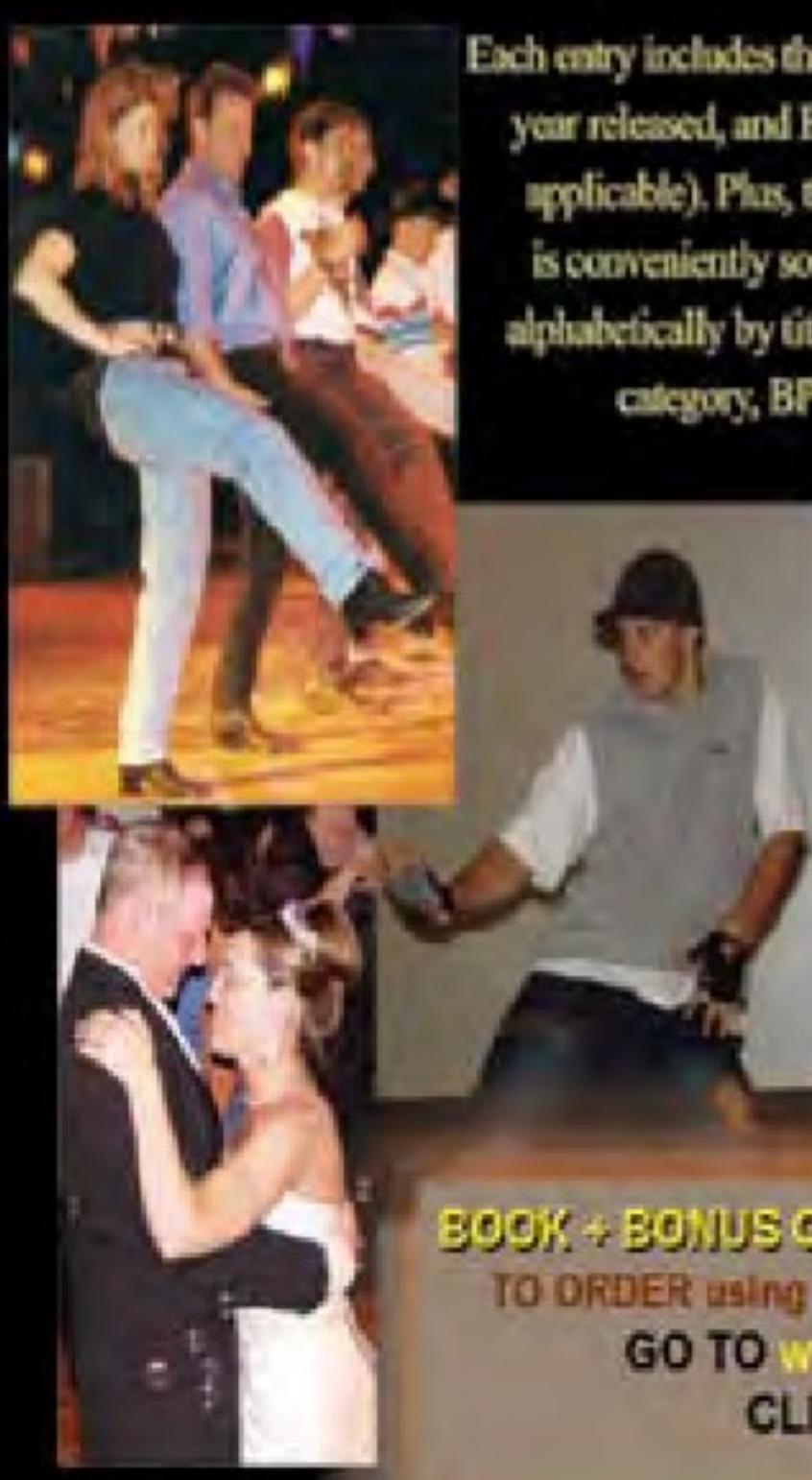
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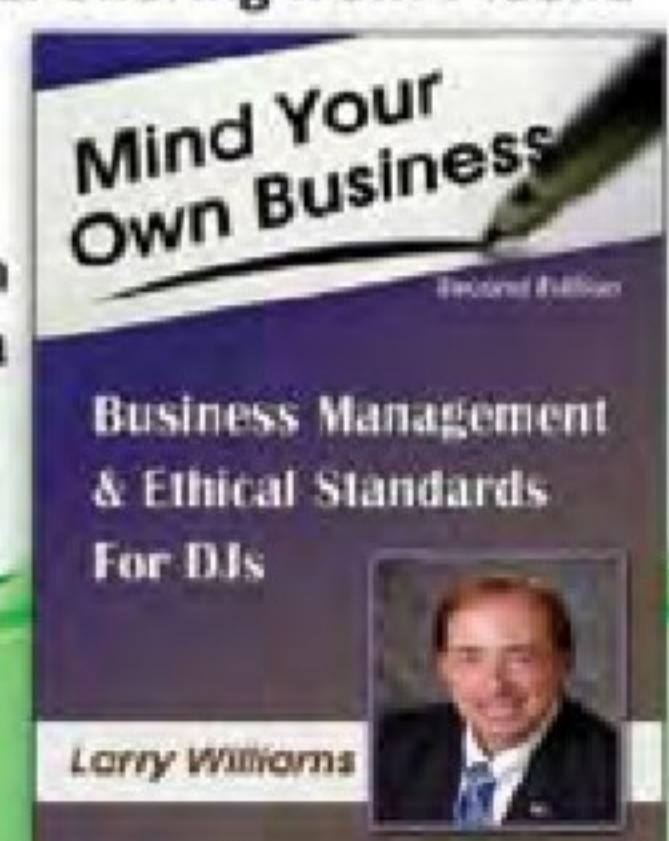
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# The Honor System

*It's always been a matter of trust*

**By Larry Williams**

**Y**es, you can borrow that...just be sure to bring it back!" How often have we heard these words? By nature, most people are very trusting of one another. In nearly every walk of life, no matter what culture, no matter what political or religious climate, we have repeatedly seen society adapt itself to the attitude of trust and honesty. Giving someone the benefit of the doubt has been a time honored tradition.

#### **The Unwritten Code**

There are many instances in our every-day lives that offer each of us the opportunity to do the right thing and reciprocate once an olive branch of trust is extended. Take restaurants for example. For as long as anyone can remember, the act of dining in an establishment is met by a matter of trust that permits customers to dine first and pay later. Though it is possible to "dine and dash," this tradition has been established over a long period of time and it trusts the customer to follow an appropriate and unwritten protocol.

Various religious denominations and houses of worship have kept "tithe" or offering canisters in plain view, with little or no fear of being victimized. Some churches also have rows of candles affixed in a prayer area where parishioners can light a candle and then drop an offering in the box provided. Such an act is expected and not often taken advantage of.

In offices and other work-related environments, you may have seen the "snack box." It is

**Remember when service stations used to let you pump your gas first and pay for it afterwards?**

often provided by an outside vendor who leaves a box full of candy, crackers, chips and chocolate bars in a high traffic area, to be enjoyed by a company's work force. Employees may enjoy a snack and are encouraged to abide by "the honor system" and leave the required coin amount in the box provided.

We have seen the same sort of honor system with newspaper racks. The receptacles are designed to open once the proper coin amount is inserted. There is obviously nothing stopping someone from walking away with ten copies of the daily newspaper. However, the unwritten rule of honesty again relies on the best of intentions.

In many larger cities, the carpool lane works upon a similar principle. Drivers are expected to abide by the law and not take advantage of the absence of law enforcement. It's a system of trust that is in place to benefit motorists and encourage participation in a manner that makes the daily commute operate more efficiently. For the most part, it works quite well.

#### **Being an Honorable DJ**

One can look at nearly every profession and find instances where trust and honesty are given the benefit of the doubt. The DJ profession is certainly no exception. In our industry, the unwritten code of responsibility to do the right thing extends to many different people. We see this expectation or perception amongst DJs, other members of the business community, our customers and audiences.

For example, banquet facilities expect us to use good judgment when wheeling in equipment through their facility. It would be irresponsible to track in mud, leave marks and disrupt the set up of a particular function. In this instance, the honor system takes on the form of common sense, decency and professional courtesy.

Parking spaces reserved for the handicapped provide many instances where DJs need to be especially careful about creating a negative perception. The simple act of parking in a place that, though often more convenient for load-in or -out, is nonetheless illegal and unethical to park in, would not be appreciated. The same can be said for engaging in hazardous driving habits while in transit to a gig.

We have all been fortunate to receive referrals from outside sources. When these sources happen to be fellow DJs or fellow wedding industry vendors, there is often an unwritten hope held by

the referring party that such an action will be met, in kind, with a reciprocal referral. When this is not possible, a positive perception can still be achieved with something as simple as a "thank you" note.

The way we treat our audiences is equally important, as it pertains to exercising appropriate protocol. In many instances, the honor system might best be appreciated by keeping our word to play a request. Because when you think about it, don't the examples of carpool lanes, newspaper racks, snack boxes, religious donations and restaurant dining have everything to do with "keeping our word?"

#### **The Benefit of the Doubt**

For as many "honor system" type of conditions that exist that keep us true to ourselves, there are also many instances where we should be applauded for the honorable way in which we, as DJs, allow our customers to participate in our honor system. Some of the more recognizable ways in which we trust our customers can include; reserving a show for a number of days on our customers word, final payment due at the end of the night, waiving a deposit for a returning client etc.

The honor system has been around for many, many years. We have seen it work efficiently and have even seen it taken away from us. Remember when service stations used to let you pump your gas first and pay for it afterwards? With few exceptions, those days are long gone. This is proof that some luxuries can be severely restricted when dishonesty is exercised.

What we have learned from the history of the honor system is the nature in which people are trusted to do the right thing when placed in a position of responsibility. When we breach that trust and take liberties with that which has been extended to us, observers can certainly be justified in drawing a negative conclusion. By creating and adhering to ethical standards, common sense and professional courtesies, we can project an image that is perceived as consistent and honorable.

*Larry Williams is the author of *Mind Your Own Business* (ProDJ Publishing), now in its 2nd edition, and is a nationally recognized seminar speaker. He serves as a chapter director for the American Disc Jockey Association and has also served with the national organization. In 2006 he was awarded the ADJA's Michael Butler Humanitarian Award. For more information, please visit [www.djlarrywilliams.com](http://www.djlarrywilliams.com).*

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# The Marrying Man

An unusual addition to a DJ's bag of tricks

By Jay Brannan

I remember wondering, as the director of entertainment for a yacht company, DJing nearly six events a week, "When am I going to use this new status as an ordained minister"? The answer came on April 5, 2008, as I stepped out from behind my Pioneer players and into that sacred spot between the bride and groom at the altar. The minister was 45 minutes late and the frantic couple wanted to get married. Knowing that I was ordained and could legally marry them, they asked me at the last minute to perform the wedding ceremony. Luckily there was a also a harpist present to provide the ceremony music.

#### It's Official

As a full time DJ and business owner with a family to provide for, I know that preparing for events is crucial. I check and double-check everything that I need for every event. I bring back-up gear, back-up music, back-up cords, back-up anything that could possibly come into play at an event. I never thought that having official credentials as a minister would ever be my back-up anything!

Let me explain how and why I actually became an ordained minister. I already mentioned I was working for a yacht company as their entertainment director and lead DJ. I was constantly on boats providing entertainment for weddings. Typically the captain of the boat performs the actual wedding ceremony. Rare circumstances occasionally arose, however, which

The wedding coordinator rushed up to me and said, "You're on. They want you to marry them!"

would prevent the captain and first mate from leaving the helm of the vessel. Hence, I was ASKED by my general manager to become the back-up minister. So, I filled out a brief application with the Universal Life Church, mailed in a nominal fee, and presto, I became an ordained minister for life. Although it was not related to the new status, three weeks later I gave my notice to the yacht company and started my own mobile DJ business.

#### The Show Must Go On

While I don't advertise the fact that I can legally marry a man and woman, I usually mention to an engaged couple at our initial meeting that if an emergency arose and the minister didn't arrive, I could step in and legally "seal the deal." I never expected anyone to take me up on the offer as they did that fateful day in April.

With less than a minute warning, the wedding coordinator rushed up to me and said, "You're on. They want you to marry them!" Needless to say I was a bit nervous, especially as I saw the furious father walk his daughter down the aisle. But I knew his anger was directed at the missing minister, and not me, and I pulled the ceremony off without a hitch. They were thrilled! We took a few photos at the altar, I signed the marriage license, and then I rushed into the adjoining room where the reception took place to announce the Grand Entrance.

One might say I'm a man of many talents.

It's funny that of the eight Mobile Beat shows I have attended, the last four as a National Demonstrator for Pioneer Pro DJ, I apparently never mentioned to any other DJs my ability to legally perform wedding ceremonies. I also don't think it ever came up on one of my roughly 8,000 posts as one of the moderators on Pioneer's forums. But, as a mobile DJ, when the emergency occurs it's great to be the one to save the day and make a couple's commitment to each other legal. It's a responsibility I take seriously. Maybe now I'll mail in an additional \$29.95 and become an ordained Jedi Knight... or Master of the Universe. **MB**

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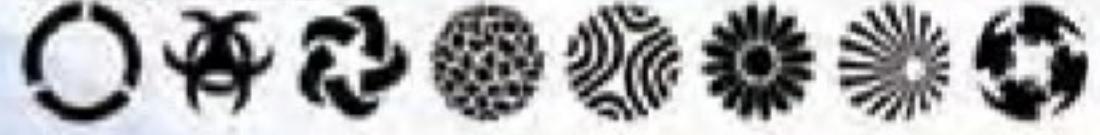
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